

Saturday April 11 1998

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INTERNATIONAL

The Guardian

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Fury in Texas as gays and lesbians bring their kids to Jesus

All God's children

In The Week

Sabine Durrant interview

Spike Milligan at eighty

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Laura Thompson writes

The sibling syndrome

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'Please make it work'

Peace deal brings hope on the long Good Friday

John Mulvan
Ireland Correspondent

THEY stood at the threshold at dawn: a heady night's haggling left them at the gateway to a new future. There was euphoria, then frustration, and later worry as the time dragged on. The once-in-a-generation chance seemed to be slipping away amid rumours of rekindled rancour. Except that this time, unbelievably, the politicians took that last, most difficult, step.

It was a very special Good Friday in Northern Ireland. Tony Blair, sustained since his arrival on Tuesday on a diet of no sleep, bananas and tea, announced a historic deal while the bailiffs fell.

Mr Blair, wan but delighted, said he hoped 30 years of violence were at last over. "When I arrived on Wednesday, I said I felt the hand of history on our shoulders. Today I hope that the burden of history can at last be lifted from them."

The deal was done, he said. Now for the tricky bit: making it work.

"I want to say this to the politicians and people of Northern Ireland with all the force I can muster. Even now, this will not work unless, in your will and in your mind, you make it work."

His was a remarkable coup, and this was his finest day as prime minister. In the circumstances, he could be forgiven for forgetting what day of the week he had arrived. It was Tuesday, with the talks apparently close to collapse.

Ulster Unionists and Sinn Féin, along with six parties between their polar positions, welcomed a deal brokered after 22 months of negotiations at Stormont. No one had dared believe it possible.

The settlement provides for an assembly in Northern Ireland, raising the possibility of David Trimble and Gerry Adams sitting alongside each other in a power-sharing ex-

The deal
The deal was announced at 11.30am on Good Friday. It was a historic moment for Northern Ireland, marking the end of 30 years of violence. The deal was brokered by the British and Irish governments, and the Ulster Unionist and Sinn Féin parties. It provided for a power-sharing executive, a new assembly, and a commitment to non-violence.

Executive
The new executive will be a cross-border body, with members from both the British and Irish governments, and the Ulster Unionist and Sinn Féin parties. It will be responsible for the day-to-day running of Northern Ireland.

Assembly
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Commitment
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Mr Clinton said last night: "The task facing people in Northern Ireland will be to make the peace endure. It will be difficult. But they have chosen hope over hate, and the promise of the future over the poison of the past."

The Irish prime minister, Bertie Ahern, remembered his mother Julia, who died, aged 87, last Sunday. Mr Ahern, still wearing a black tie, admitted it had been a difficult week. He said: "I am sure my mother would have been pleased that we made so much progress."

George Mitchell, the former US senator who had grasped the poisoned chalice as talks chairman, said: "I am delighted. I really am."

He added: "The people of Northern Ireland will decide whether or not this structure functions. I would encourage them to tell their political leaders loudly, clearly and without equivocation that they want this to work. If they do, it will work."

The political leaders seemed stunned but later delivered their own spin. Mr Trimble said: "What everybody in Northern Ireland has won today is a new deal that will give everybody the opportunity to participate in a unique political arrangement."

Mr Adams, also fighting some rank-and-file dissent, said the fight to unite Ireland would go on. "This is a phase in our struggle. That struggle must continue until it reaches a final goal."

Mr Hume, expected to be deputy first minister in the new assembly, said: "Only once in a generation does an opportunity like this come along, an opportunity to resolve our deep and tragic conflict. This time we must succeed. We have to seize this opportunity."

But 80 miles away in Londonderry, a family was burying this year's 15th terrorist victim. Trevor Deane, aged 34, a stepfather to four children, is the latest of 3,500 victims of The Troubles. As a new era beckons, Northern Ireland hopes he is the last.



Bertie Ahern and Tony Blair yesterday after the historic agreement was announced

"I believe today that courage has triumphed. I said when I arrived here on Wednesday night that I felt the hand of history upon us. Today I hope that the burden of history can at long last start to be lifted from our shoulders."

Tony Blair

"It is a day we should treasure. Today is about the promise of a bright future, a day when we hope a line can be drawn under the bloody past."

Bertie Ahern

There is nothing in this that I can't live with

Billy McQuiston, aged 40, a member of 1st company of the Ulster Defence Association, was released from the Maze six months ago. He explains why he welcomes the agreement

"I SERVED 12½ years in prison, for armed robbery and weapons charges. I joined the Ulster Defence Association when I was 15. My father did a life sentence for paramilitary activities. The IRA has tried to kill me five times and the number of family and friends I have seen killed runs into dozens. If I

can sign up to this agreement, anybody can. At the end of the day I think the parties realised that everybody was going to have to give something. No one is going to be a clear winner. The prisoner issue was at the core of the problem for loyalists and republicans. That is what makes me think the parties are serious, that

we can draw a line under this and start again.

If you talk to the families around my area, at least 80 per cent of them will have somebody in prison or will have had somebody in prison. This is the thing that will mean most to working class families, loyalist and republican. It is the one tangible thing that they can see.

If you start talking to people in the street about cross-border bodies or power-sharing assemblies, you'll get this dazed look, but if you tell somebody that their son or their daddy is coming home, they'll be celebrating in the streets.

People outside the province and even some inside don't

realise the importance of the prisoner issue. There wouldn't have been a ceasefire if it hadn't been for the loyalist paramilitaries. The loyalist fringe parties would have had the prisoners at the core of any agreement that they would sign.

When the ceasefire was first discussed, about two years before it was called, the loyalist parties were told that the prisoner issue would be looked at sympathetically. After three years of ceasefire there hasn't been one prisoner released. There hasn't been one prisoner issue effectively dealt with. The paramilitary point of view is that if the war is over we want our prisoners back.

The only way we are going to get the paramilitary groups to fade into the background is by letting the prisoners out.

Of all the parties, I think that was hardest for the Unionists to understand. The nationalists know how important the issue is in their own communities but the Unionists are middle class and have a law and order agenda so they see them as just being terrorists, but I think they have begun to realise how important it was.

If you had asked me five years ago if there would be a settlement I would have said not in my lifetime. But now I am optimistic that this settlement will work. I think if the Progressive Unionist Party

and the Ulster Democratic Party feel it is something they can sign up to then that will be good enough for loyalists. We would see ourselves as the army of the Protestant people and if the Protestant people can sign up to it then we will have to go with their wishes.

There is nothing in the deal I can't live with. The only thing that would have put me off was a definite movement towards a united Irish republic. But the Union is safe, the British government has guaranteed that, as long as the people here consent to be British. I also don't have a problem with power sharing. The days are gone when one part of the people has more

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The peace deal

Main players/ Leaders who kept foes on board, a selfless statesman, and a minister who used her head

EWEN MACASKILL profiles the six key participants in lengthy talks process



Mo Mowlam

MO MOWLAM, the Northern Ireland Secretary, introduced a new dimension to the long and tortured negotiations: her wit. She used it to devastating effect, taking it off at crucial moments to scratch her scalp and send the message that she too was vulnerable. Her appointment as Northern Ireland Secretary last May came at a time when she was recovering from a brain tumour. Throughout the last year there were whispers from all sides that, physically and mentally, she was not up to such a demanding job. But she has outlasted her critics. She brought an earth-

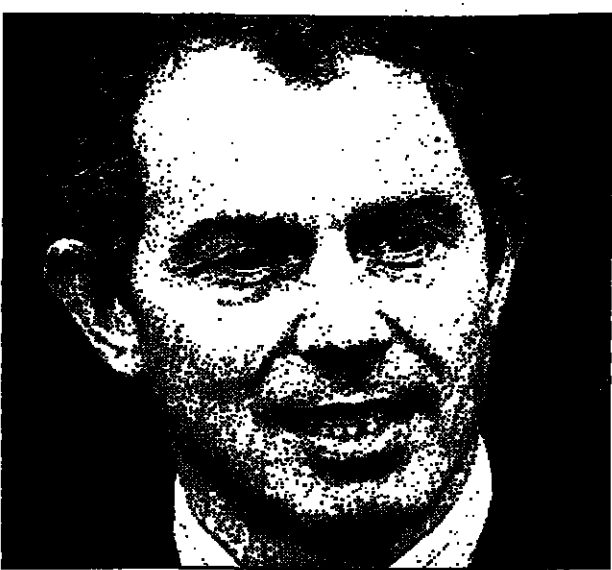
iness and bonhomie to the Northern Ireland talks that contrasted with her Tory predecessors. Her more direct, straight-talking approach was exemplified when, harangued by Ian Paisley last year, she simply told him to "fuck off". While David Ervine, the equally straight-talking leader of the Progressive Unionist Party, happily met her for quiet pints, she frequently infuriated the Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble, who told colleagues last year: "The trouble with that woman is she can't walk in a straight line." With a settlement secured, she will be rewarded with Cabinet promotion when the reshuffle comes, if she wants to leave Northern Ireland.

Tony Blair

TONY BLAIR'S task was to deliver the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble. The nationalists, Sinn Féin and the SDLP, had the Irish government as their champion and conduit. Mr Blair, as prime minister representing the whole of Northern Ireland, theoretically spoke for both communities but in reality his focus was Mr Trimble.

They were unlikely political bedfellows. Mr Blair was privately appalled when as Opposition leader he watched Mr Trimble come across as a narrow-minded and provocative Orangeman in the 1996 Drumcree stand-off. But as prime minister he had to establish a good relationship and gave Mr Trimble open access to Downing Street.

That access created tensions with Mo Mowlam. Although close allies, she and Mr Blair had several angry exchanges as the Northern Ireland Secretary expressed her resentment at the Ulster Unionist leader going behind her back to Downing Street.



Mr Blair's tactics, as confirmed in a leaked memo from the negotiations, were to encourage Mr Trimble to make concessions to the nationalists but to be careful at the same time to avoid opening up the Ulster Unionist leader to accusations of betrayal from the Unionist community. The settlement, less than

a month away from the anniversary of Labour's election victory, marks the big success of Mr Blair's government. He carried the referendum in Scotland and Wales last September but this settlement is on a different scale, an achievement that will be recognised internationally.

Bertie Ahern

BERTIE AHERN's elevation to Taoiseach was a crucial part of the peace process. Irish government sources confirm the widespread view that Sinn Féin was never comfortable with his predecessor, John Bruton, who seemed more at home with the Ulster Unionists.

Both Mr Ahern and Mr Bruton's predecessor, Albert Reynolds, are old-fashioned political wheeler-dealers who provided the impetus from Dublin to find a solution to the problems of the North.

Mr Ahern has a reputation for being both amiable, happy to thrash out problems over a pint, and cunning.

Last week, on the eve of a visit to Downing Street, he made a very public threat that the peace process would be scuppered unless the cross-party bodies were strengthened so that they became more than just chat-shows. This was interpreted at the time as an attempt to ambush Mr Blair but it increasingly looks like a typical piece of pre-



arranged theatrics with Downing Street's collusion. The settlement has given Dublin an increased role in Northern Ireland. But there is a downside. Many in Mr Ahern's Fianna Fáil will oppose Ireland's renunciation of its traditional territorial claim to Northern Ireland. Mr Ahern, whose coalition government has only a slender

majority in the Dáil, will not relish an internal party revolt or dissent from party members in the referendum on changing the constitution next month. Fianna Fáil is the republican party and its supporters may not regard peace in Northern Ireland as a decent swap for dropping the claim to the North.



David Trimble

THE leader of the official Ulster Unionist Party has emerged with a settlement that gives him a chance to be both peacemaker and to fend off ultra-Unionists such as the Rev Ian Paisley and sceptics within his own party. He has sought to avoid the fate of predecessors such as Brian Faulkner, who were left open to the charge of sell-out. Mr Trimble has tried to take his party with him, breaking off from the talks on Thursday night to spend 90 minutes addressing his party's executive. In public, he has maintained the hardline rhetoric of Unionism, as when his party rejected the proposed

deal on Tuesday. But in private he has shown himself to be more mature. This has been partly forced on him by political reality. With John Major in power with a small majority, Mr Trimble had a blocking veto but he lost that in the May general election. Even before that, he had been preparing for the day when demographic change would mean the Unionists no longer have an in-built majority in Northern Ireland. One of his first moves on becoming leader was to drop the party's opposition to devolution. He hopes an Assembly will prove popular enough with the Catholic population to provide an alternative to incorporation into a united Ireland.



Gerry Adams

SINN FÉIN president Gerry Adams' problem almost exactly mirrors that of his Unionist counterpart David Trimble: how to deliver a settlement without opening up charges of betrayal from his own rank-and-file. He and his vice-president Martin McGuinness have spent years persuading the republican movement to stay behind them as the balance has tilted from all-out violence to engagement in the democratic process. Adams has lost republicans to the fringe groups and will have to work hard to prevent it becoming a flood. In spite of repeated predictions by the Unionists

that Sinn Féin would eventually find an exit to leave the talks, Mr Adams has struck with it. Northern Ireland officials acknowledge he has proved a clever and disciplined tactician, timing each development almost perfectly. But they temper this assessment with warnings about his ruthlessness and scepticism that violence has been entirely renounced. Mr Adams's vehicle for entry to the democratic process was SDLP leader John Hume. Ironically, one test of the Adams strategy is whether Sinn Féin will eat into, and possibly even overtake, the SDLP as the main nationalist party in the Assembly elections in June.



John Hume

THOSE dismissive of the SDLP leader call him "Saint John" but of all those in the negotiations, none has been involved longer than John Hume, who has been battling for a peaceful settlement since 1969. His altruism enrages fellow party members who can see what he apparently cannot, that Sinn Féin threatens to supplant the SDLP. Mr Hume gives the impression that peace is a greater goal than party advantage. There has been a personal cost: verbal abuse and threats, as well as cigarettes and alcohol, have taken a toll on his health. He showed the initial piece

of courage that got the process under way, entering into a dialogue with Mr Adams at a time when the Sinn Féin leader was regarded as a pariah. Without Mr Hume, there would have been no pan-nationalist alliance — Sinn Féin, SDLP, the Irish government and the Irish-American lobby — and no peace process. In spite of occasional bluffs and threats of his own during the negotiations, he was the least likely of the party leaders to walk away. His reward will be a further enhanced reputation internationally. But his own party members will continue to look on in near despair at the electoral march of Sinn Féin.

Loyalists jeer Paisley

The outsiders/ DUP leader discovers his power base is crumbling as former supporters tell him to shut up and go home

John Mullan
Ireland Correspondent

HE SUDDENLY looked very old, and his powers of scathing response were hit by the stutters. Ian Paisley was in trouble. His former supporters, working-class loyalists, were taunting the North Antrim MP and Northern Ireland MEP. One 22-year-old had three screamed words of advice for the founder of the Martyrs' Memorial Church: "Shut your mouth." Amid chaotic scenes, Mr Paisley's new foes ruined his press conference at Stormont, called to denounce the treacherous negotiators at Castle Buildings. He once persuaded them to appear on rolling hills clutching firearm certificates to demonstrate opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. He has marched them up the hill too often. Now their political representatives, from the Progressive Unionist Party and the Ulster Democratic Party, are younger, urban and working-class. And, unlike Mr Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, they were in the talks. Nobody had been so rude to him before. "What about that big house you've got?" one heckler cried, underlining the financial division they had once been prepared to ignore because of Mr Paisley's uncompromising Unionism. He was 72 on Monday, but

he seemed to age as he was greeted with shouts of "Grand old Duke of York. Go home". One called: "You are a dinosaur. Your days are over." Another shouted: "You ran away from the talks. You are too old to run." Mr Paisley hollered back, but the press conference descended into farce. He was on the outside, and there are those who wonder if he is finished, cut out of Northern Ireland's future. It looked like the end of an era. One of the shouted comments early yesterday was to link the DUP with the Loyalist Volunteer Force. It is enough to send Mr Paisley into fits of apoplexy. His former supporters, linked to the rival mainstream loyalist terror groups who are on ceasefire, are behind the accusation. It is based on the appearance of former DUP MP for Mid-Ulster Willie McCrea on a platform with LVF leader Billy Wright. He also spoke at Wright's funeral service in December. The LVF is one of a growing number of small terrorist groups opposed to the ceasefires and to the negotiations at Stormont. It has murdered nine people, one of them Protestant, since the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), another group still intent on violence, killed Wright, aged 37, at the Maze prison. Security forces are worried about the prospects of violence in the run-up to the



Outside Stormont... Ian Paisley and Peter Robinson of the DUP PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL McERLANE

simultaneous referendums on May 22 throughout Ireland. They expect the fringe paramilitaries to attempt to wreck the push for a Yes vote. Aside from the LVF, the splinter groups are on the republican side. As well as the INLA, whose political wing is the Irish Republican Socialist Party, there is Continuity IRA, responsible for bombing the mid-Ulster towns of Moira and Portadown this year; and Dissident IRA, made up of IRA terrorists disenchanted with the peace process. Ronnie Fianagan, RUC chief constable, believes that the dissident group is linked to the 32-County Sovereignty

Committee. The recently formed group, which draws most of its support in the Republic, denies the allegation. It is planning to campaign against the deal. They have already held several public meetings throughout the Republic, and are intending to descend on West Belfast, Gerry Adams's backyard, later this month. It is an area well-known to the committee's vice chairwoman, Bernadette Sands-McKevitt, sister of IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands. Her appearance there could be an embarrassment to the Sinn Féin leadership. The group is also taking its campaign to the US this month.

Francie Mackey, Sinn Féin councillor in Omagh, Co Tyrone, is also a member of the 32-County Sovereignty Committee. Sinn Féin has told him to quit the rival organisation or be kicked out. He is staying put, proclaiming that he is true to Sinn Féin's traditional values. He said: "It is difficult at this stage to weigh up exactly what is happening. But those who felt there was a possibility that these arrangements would be part of a transitional phase will be disappointed. If Sinn Féin takes up its place in the northern assembly, it will in real terms be an acceptance of Britain's illegal claim."

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The peace deal

'Tony Blair deserves to enjoy the success he has had. This is the best beacon of hope we've had for a very long time'

John Major

A springtime promise of peace... a message of hope for the world

Reaction/ Clinton, Chirac and Major praise Blair and Ahern

By David Doherty

PRESIDENT Clinton welcomed the deal he had helped to rescue by saying that Northern Ireland had "the promise of a springtime of peace" after years of violence. He hailed Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern as

remarkable leaders who did an unbelievable job.

Mr Clinton downplayed his own role, saying: "I did what I was asked to do." He added: "I believe there will be very significant economic benefits flowing to the people of Northern Ireland if peace takes hold. In the days to come, there may be those who

will try to undermine this great achievement, not only with words but perhaps also with violence. All the parties and all the rest of us must stand shoulder to shoulder to defy any such appeals."

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said the Queen was delighted. "The Queen has been following the events of the day very closely. Naturally she shares everyone's delight."

Former Tory prime minister John Major, who signed

the 1998 Downing Street document which started the peace process, "warmly congratulated" Mr Blair.

He said: "He's taken risks. It was right to do so. It was right to give priority to this... I hope he enjoys the success he has had. He deserves to. This is the best beacon of hope we've had for a very long time."

Very difficult decisions lay ahead, he said, and the bloodshed may not be over. But he added: "I think we have got

an agreement which stretches far wider across Northern Ireland than we could possibly have imagined. That is extremely good news."

Conservative leader William Hague paid tribute to Mr Major's contribution to the peace process and to Mr Blair and Mr Ahern. "Both prime ministers have worked extremely hard and I congratulate them very warmly."

"I think they've done extremely well, both in the

work they've been doing and in building on the painstaking work of John Major over the last few years. It is a very exciting day."

Colin Parry, whose son was murdered by an IRA bomb in Warrington, Lancashire, said he cried when news of a settlement came through. "I have spoken personally to (Northern Ireland Secretary) Mo Mowlam a couple of times in the last couple of days," he said. "She has injected such enthusiasm and urgency into

the programme and has produced a first rate blueprint for Northern Ireland."

"It rekindles my faith in human nature that good can overcome evil. From the day that Tim died that has always been my message."

The leader of the Catholic church in England and Wales, Cardinal Basil Hume, said: "We can only hope and pray now that goodwill will prevail on all sides and that the people of Northern Ireland will be able to look forward to

a future when violence will be outlawed and peace will always prevail."

French President Jacques Chirac praised Mr Blair and Mr Ahern for their tenacity. "This agreement is an example for the international community. It shows that the longing for peace and reason eventually overcomes violence."

"This success is for Europe, and beyond for the whole world, a message of hope in the future."

The long road ahead to stability

The future/ Sectarianism must end before the violence can finally be left behind

By Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

ACATHOLIC teenager frustrated at not being able to go to a Chinese restaurant at the end of his street in a Protestant area of Belfast finally cracked and went for a take-away. He was stabbed in the eye with a screwdriver, one of the thousands of ugly, sectarian incidents that have taken place in Northern Ireland down the years but which have gone unreported amid the atrocities.

It is that sectarian mindset, reinforced by 400 years of brutality and insecurity, that those searching for permanent peace will eventually have to overcome. It could take decades.

Yesterday's settlement was a beginning. All day, amid the euphoria, the problems that will dominate the months and years ahead began to emerge, from IRA decommissioning and the future of policing to splits among Unionists.

The flashpoints are obvious. Sinn Féin's annual conference next week will present Gerry Adams' plan to prevent "mass defections" to more militant republicanism. The referendum on the settlement on May 22 will the Protestant community vote for peace or opt for "no surren-

der"? Election to a Northern Ireland assembly on June 25 will the Rev Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party win enough votes to be seriously disruptive influence?

There are many more problems. The marching season follows soon after, with the annual stand-off at Drumcree, against a background of inflamed Protestant opinion. And what of Sinn Féin: will it combine participation in the assembly with street demonstrations and other disruptive tactics? And what happens to the IRA: will it be disbanded, its weapons handed over?

There are forces operating in a positive direction. Pessimists have been comparing the settlement with the Sunningdale agreement in 1973 that collapsed. What is different this time is that almost all the main parties have been engaged in the negotiations. Mr Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and the independent Unionist Robert McCartney have been the only absentees, along with the most extreme of the republican and loyalist paramilitaries.

The participants have created a framework capable of working if there is the necessary political will. After months of negotiation, the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, and Mr Adams have still not engaged directly, only through third parties. In



Family and friends of INLA victim Trevor Deeney at his funeral, and (below) the victim

PHOTOGRAPH: TREVOR MERRIDE



ment, tourism, agriculture, fishing and other areas.

As a sop to Mr Trimble, a British-Irish Council is to be set up, a Celtic convention with representatives from the Scottish parliament and the Welsh assembly. That too could develop. Mr Blair faces the prospect not only of the

threat posed by the nationalist forces in Northern Ireland but a secessionist movement in Scotland, the Scottish National Party. The best way to combat that could be the creation of a full federal system for Britain, a new redefinition of relations with Westminster.

Who won and who lost from yesterday's deal? Mr Hume said this week there would be no winners and no losers, that everyone would have to give a bit and the only winner would be peace. There are risks for all the participants, not least himself. He could see his own party overtaken in the June election by Sinn Féin as the main representative of the nationalist population.

Mr Adams, as always, faces the risk of a bullet from dissident republicans, who have since the ceasefire accused him of being another Michael Collins, betraying republican aspirations. He has taken the

IRA with him so far. No one can predict with certainty how many republicans will defect to the republican splinter groups still waging war.

Mr Trimble has potentially an even bigger problem in holding his party together. Unionist MPs such as Willie Ross and William Thompson have made no secret of their belief that their leader should never have joined the talks.

The pressure will increase on him if Mr Paisley can win a substantial proportion of Protestant votes.

The armed groups that are not party to the settlement will be out to produce atrocities that will test the resolve of those who have reached the agreement. But the potential is there for a new political dialogue, one that can create new relationships, one that might years from now even break down the ghettos in Belfast and Londonderry, the ghettos of the mind as well as the physical ones.

Trouble looms for Trimble as voters talk of sell-out

The people/ Hardliners in Portadown reject pact

By Stuart Millar

SITTING in his front room, beneath a framed sketch of Orangemen marching to Drumcree parish church, Ivor Young has little doubt what the peace process will mean for Northern Ireland.

"Of course there is going to be a bloodbath," he predicted yesterday before the agreement. "If the deal goes through, true loyalists will fight back. If it doesn't, the republicans will go back to their killing."

As hopes of a settlement spread yesterday, radio phone-ins and television chat shows were filled with people voicing, in almost disbelieving tones, their hope that a significant corner had been turned. Against this mood of cautious optimism, Mr Young's doom-laden prophecy may appear as an irrelevant symbol of outdated, entrenched hatred.

But his opinion cannot be dismissed out of hand. Mr Young is typical of disillusioned hardline loyalists whose vote will count at the referendum scheduled for May 22. He is also typical of many Protestant voters in David Trimble's constituency of Portadown.

More than 70 per cent of the town is loyalist. The former home of the murdered loyalist terrorist Billy Wright, it is the epicentre of support for his Loyalist Volunteer Force, which has condemned the peace process. It is also the venue for the most contentious parade in the Orange marching season, down the nationalist's Garvagh Road to Drumcree church.

In the early 1990s the town centre was devastated by an IRA bomb. Last year, a large part of it was again reduced to rubble by a 500lb car bomb, blamed on but not claimed by

the breakaway Continuity IRA. Around here, people feel they owe the peace process nothing, and the republicans even less.

Already there are plans for marches and rallies, co-ordinated by Mr Young's Concerned Protestant Committee. "What they have all done up at Stormont doesn't matter a bit," he said. "Ninety-nine per cent of the people around here will never let Dublin run our country. Nothing can happen without our support and we're going to make sure they don't get it."

These views are echoed around the town: true loyalists would never sell out Ulster, true loyalists would never sit down with the IRA, true loyalists will never roll over and take this.

The finger of blame has been pointed at Mr Trimble. "The people here are sickened by what they have heard," said Mark Proctor, a Protestant community worker. "It's no big surprise they sold us out because we always knew that Trimble would be weak. He's finished here because he didn't listen to the people who elected him. They will never trust him again."

Along Garvagh Road, the mood among nationalist residents was more upbeat. "Up until now it's been everything we could do to keep the lines of communication with the loyalists open," said community centre worker Michael Creaney. "But now we will be able to concentrate on really building bridges. It will take a while but at least we can make a start."

But with preparations already under way for the Orange parade in July, residents fear that any confrontations will unravel the settlement.

And, just as with their loyalist neighbours, there was a feeling that the people had been left behind by the politicians. "They forgot to make sure that they had us with them," said another resident who asked not to be named. "Nobody really knows what to think because they don't know what's been agreed. It's a bit like asking how you will feel when you land on the moon - you won't know until you get there."

'There is nothing in the deal I can't live with'

continued from page 1 power than the others. It's when that happens that I think the trouble starts.

That's why people like Ian Paisley and the Democratic Unionists are men of the past. Every step along the way David Trimble had to look over his shoulder for Ian Paisley. If he had stumbled at any point the DUP would have

run over him. I think he's come across as a great statesman.

Ian Paisley says what about the victims? But how many DUP men actually served? How many DUP men have sacrificed their lives in prison for that belief?

Paisley is always marching people to the top of the hill and backing down. They will

be the people who are seen as warmongers after the referendum passes the agreement.

The same applies to the fringe terrorists. I don't believe there is a serious threat from the Loyalist Volunteer Force, and I don't believe they've had a groundswell of support.

Do people seriously think that a society which has fought a war for 25 years will

tolerate people like that when the war is over?

The thing about the LVP and these other fringe groups on both sides is that they have no political backbone. They won't have the stomach to keep fighting when they see everybody else has put their guns down.

Billy Wright fell into the same trap as Paisley and the

INLA. When the war stopped they didn't know how to stop.

There is no way of guaranteeing that the violence won't start again. Decommissioning would be a step in the right direction but it's not the solution.

The paramilitaries could hand in every gun they had tomorrow and get another boatload in next week. It's not

as if there's a limited supply of them in Europe.

The reason I was involved in the IRA was that I wanted this war over before my children had to go through what I had to go through.

I live in a house with steel doors, steel shutters, television cameras. The life my family had to live, I wanted it over with. I didn't want them

looking over their shoulder every minute.

I am a defender of my people against any aggressor. I hope I never have to go back to prison, and I hope the violence doesn't start again. But I don't regret the things I did. If it starts again I am a soldier. I have to do what I'm bid."

— Interview by Stuart Millar

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Waist-deep, firefighters are forced to hang on to lamp posts and road signs as they struggle to help residents of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

PHOTOGRAPH: MAMP

Booming pound good for holidays

British tourists benefit as costs fall to their lowest levels for 10 years, writes **Clare Longrigg**

THE 2 million British tourists who have fled the country for an Easter break could be forgiven for wearing a smug expression. A strong pound for the second year running has made holidays cheaper for British tourists than at any time in almost 10 years. While British hoteliers are fretting

about falling numbers of foreign visitors, UK tour operators are celebrating. "The strong pound has had a major impact on prices," said Helen Leversedge, spokeswoman at Thomson. "Holiday prices are effectively being held at 1997 levels. Besides which, people's spending money is going a lot further."

Ed Sims, sales and marketing director of Unijet, said: "It's very rare that tourists get the double benefit of two successive years of a strong pound. Last year, we were able to use it to price holidays cheaply, and this year, when the clients get to their destination, they will find their money goes a long way. It's eight years since I remember the two coming together." Because of this double whammy, the market is up 18 per cent across the board. British holidaymakers are benefiting from weak currencies and turbulent economies

in Spain, Thailand and the Caribbean. The strength of sterling against the dollar for the past 18 months has made destinations such as Florida extremely popular, while tour operators have been able to buy cheaper aviation fuel in the United States. "The levels of duty on imported goods into this country makes things like sports goods and designer labels twice the price in the UK," said Mr Sims. "People used to go mainly to Florida's theme parks, but with the dollar around 1.63 to the pound, we're organising more shop-

ping trips to Florida than ever before." British visitors to Italy have seen their pound's buying power rise from 2,300 lire to 2,800 lire over the past two years. And the pound now buys almost 10 francs compared with the recent low point of just over seven. Most dramatic of all, this time last year the pound was worth 480 drachmas; this year it shot up to 528.83 drachmas. By devaluing the drachma, Greece has made itself one of the cheapest destinations for British holidaymakers. So next year Greece will be pre-

paring for 120,000 extra British tourists, and top Greek hotels and mid-range accommodation will be about 25 per cent cheaper for British tourists this summer. Luxury goods and designer clothes and make-up are also much cheaper than in the rest of Europe. "Greece has had a number of difficult years," Mr Sims said. "If they had a bad year, hotel owners used to put the prices up. We've finally managed to persuade them that the only way to break the cycle is to drop their prices."

Britain braces itself

Sarah Hall

BITAIN is braced for another lashing of rain, sleet and snow, after torrential rains yesterday heralded the Easter weekend and brought death and destruction.

Two people were killed and four — including a 14-year-old boy — were feared dead after April showers became downpours and brought chaos across the nation.

In the worst hit area — the West Midlands — a month's rain fell in 12 hours and the River Avon rose to its highest level for a century, forcing hundreds to be evacuated.

In Northamptonshire, where flood levels rose to 6 ft, a woman found dead in her home was believed to have drowned after water cascaded into her Northampton house. Her body was found in a room, aged 33, believed to have fallen from her narrow-boat home on the River Nene.

In Worcestershire, the Avon, which rose by four metres in 12 hours, claimed one casualty when a middle-aged man was found dead in open water at the River Mead Caravan Park, Wyre Piddle. Two other caravanners were last night missing. Twenty-six holidaymakers at the site were plucked from the water by police helicopters and fire brigade lifeboats.

Upstream, at Abbots Salford caravan park, Worcester-shire, tragedy was averted after a boat carrying a fire

crew and three of the 46 caravanners being rescued capsized, forcing its occupants to cling to floating debris in the freezing water.

Hopeless were fading for the 14-year-old boy, feared drowned after a van in which he was travelling was washed into a ditch as it overtook vehicles stranded in floodwater near Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

Nineteen anglers trapped on an island in Little Linford lake, Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, were evacuated by an RAF Sea King helicopter and fire brigade boats as the waters rose at the rate of 9 ft an hour.

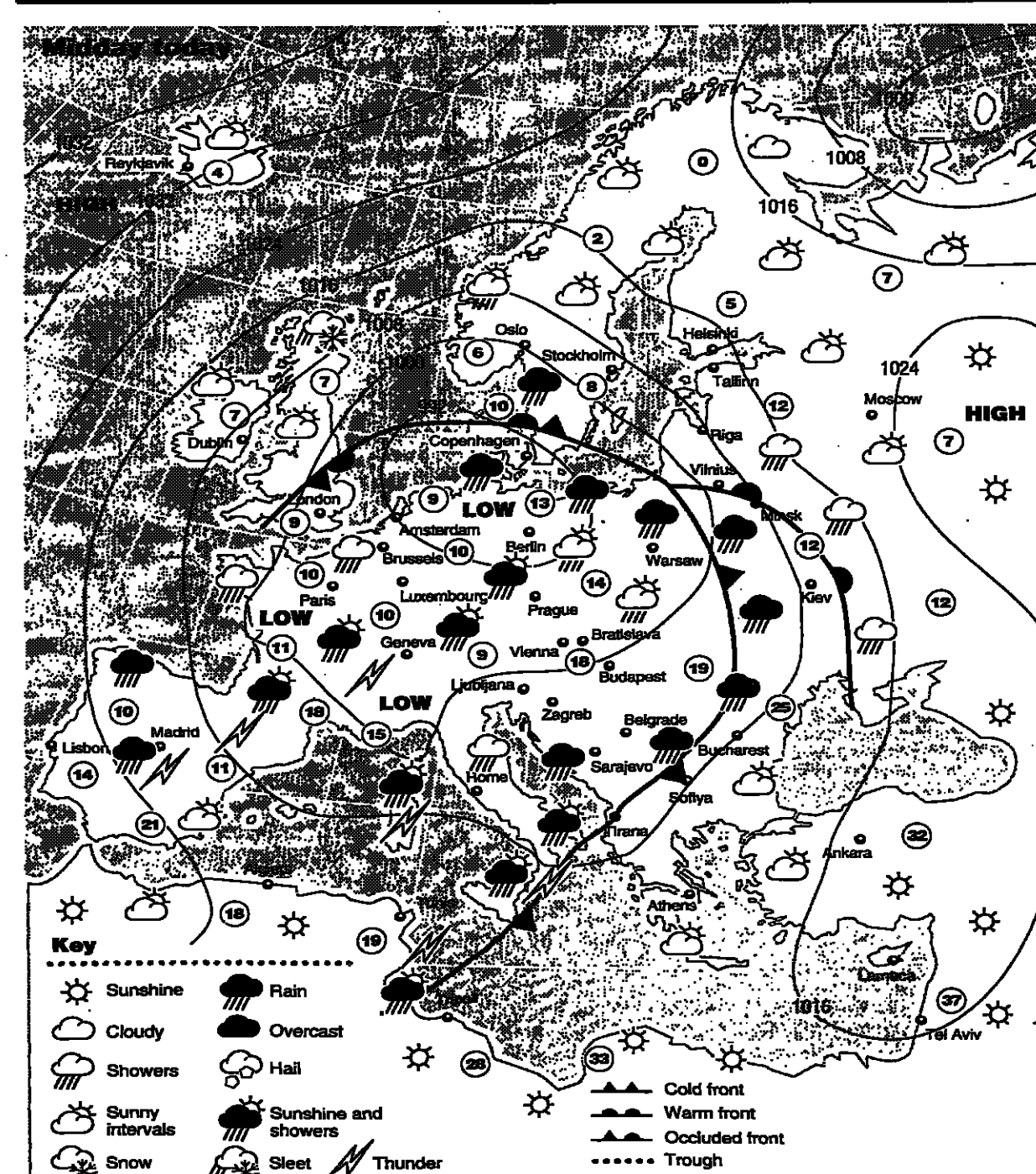
A helicopter also winched 54-year-old John Barnham, from Pershore, from the roof of his Land Rover, minutes before it was swept away, as he stood on the roof, the middle of Piddle Brook, Pinvin, Worcestershire.

In Leamington Spa, the Lem broke its banks engulfing the Apollo Cinema under 12 ft of water, so preventing a screening of *Thelma & Louise*.

As the rain continued to hammer down, and the Met Office warned that the situation would get worse, Forecaster Rob Bunn of the Independent PA WeatherCentre, said: "The outlook is not good. Scotland is already getting rain. In other areas, it will be exceptionally wet."

The south-east will bear the brunt of the rain, and the north will be showery. It will feel bitterly cold with temperatures a maximum of 10c (50f) in London and 6c (43f) in Edinburgh.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

Today	Tomorrow	Monday	Tuesday
Algeria 18-24 F	Algeria 18-24 F	Algeria 18-24 F	Algeria 18-24 F
Amsterdam 10-17 F	Amsterdam 10-17 F	Amsterdam 10-17 F	Amsterdam 10-17 F
Antwerp 10-17 F	Antwerp 10-17 F	Antwerp 10-17 F	Antwerp 10-17 F
Berlin 10-17 F	Berlin 10-17 F	Berlin 10-17 F	Berlin 10-17 F
Brussels 10-17 F	Brussels 10-17 F	Brussels 10-17 F	Brussels 10-17 F
Copenhagen 10-17 F	Copenhagen 10-17 F	Copenhagen 10-17 F	Copenhagen 10-17 F
Cairo 28-34 F	Cairo 28-34 F	Cairo 28-34 F	Cairo 28-34 F
Geneva 10-17 F	Geneva 10-17 F	Geneva 10-17 F	Geneva 10-17 F
Lisbon 10-17 F	Lisbon 10-17 F	Lisbon 10-17 F	Lisbon 10-17 F
London 10-17 F	London 10-17 F	London 10-17 F	London 10-17 F
Madrid 10-17 F	Madrid 10-17 F	Madrid 10-17 F	Madrid 10-17 F
Moscow 10-17 F	Moscow 10-17 F	Moscow 10-17 F	Moscow 10-17 F
Paris 10-17 F	Paris 10-17 F	Paris 10-17 F	Paris 10-17 F
Rome 10-17 F	Rome 10-17 F	Rome 10-17 F	Rome 10-17 F
Stockholm 10-17 F	Stockholm 10-17 F	Stockholm 10-17 F	Stockholm 10-17 F
Turkey 10-17 F	Turkey 10-17 F	Turkey 10-17 F	Turkey 10-17 F
Vienna 10-17 F	Vienna 10-17 F	Vienna 10-17 F	Vienna 10-17 F

Around the world

Location	Forecast
Algeria	18-24 F
Amsterdam	10-17 F
Antwerp	10-17 F
Berlin	10-17 F
Brussels	10-17 F
Copenhagen	10-17 F
Cairo	28-34 F
Geneva	10-17 F
Lisbon	10-17 F
London	10-17 F
Madrid	10-17 F
Moscow	10-17 F
Paris	10-17 F
Rome	10-17 F
Stockholm	10-17 F
Turkey	10-17 F
Vienna	10-17 F

European weather outlook

Many northern, central and eastern parts of Scandinavia will be dry with sunny spells, but cold. However, Denmark and southern parts of Norway and Sweden will be cloudy with outbreaks of rain. Highs will range from -1 to 2C in the north, 3-6C in the south.

France will have another cool and unsettled day with heavy showers and thunderstorms mixed in with sunny spells. Alpine regions will have some decent falls of snow in most areas. Highs will range from 8-11C in northern and central areas to 15C along the south coast.

Northern parts of Iberia will have yet another disturbed day with lots of cloud with rain and thundery showers. Showers will also affect central areas, but they will peter out towards the south and this is where the best sunshine will be found. Highs 10-14C in the north, 18-21C in the south.

Much of Italy will have outbreaks of rain or thunderstorms with only limited sunshine. Highs will range from 13-16C in the north to 17-20C in the south.

Greece: It will be another warm day, but cloud and rain will begin to edge in from the west later in the day. Highs 21-24C.

Radio 4

07.00-08.00: *News*. 08.00: *World News*. 08.30: *World News*. 09.00: *World News*. 09.30: *World News*. 10.00: *World News*. 10.30: *World News*. 11.00: *World News*. 11.30: *World News*. 12.00: *World News*. 12.30: *World News*. 13.00: *World News*. 13.30: *World News*. 14.00: *World News*. 14.30: *World News*. 15.00: *World News*. 15.30: *World News*. 16.00: *World News*. 16.30: *World News*. 17.00: *World News*. 17.30: *World News*. 18.00: *World News*. 18.30: *World News*. 19.00: *World News*. 19.30: *World News*. 20.00: *World News*. 20.30: *World News*. 21.00: *World News*. 21.30: *World News*. 22.00: *World News*. 22.30: *World News*. 23.00: *World News*. 23.30: *World News*. 24.00: *World News*.

Television and radio — Saturday and Sunday

BBC 1
08.00: *The First Years*. 08.25: *News*. 08.50: *Children's BBC*. 09.00: *News*. 09.15: *World News*. 09.30: *World News*. 09.45: *World News*. 10.00: *World News*. 10.15: *World News*. 10.30: *World News*. 10.45: *World News*. 11.00: *World News*. 11.15: *World News*. 11.30: *World News*. 11.45: *World News*. 12.00: *World News*. 12.15: *World News*. 12.30: *World News*. 12.45: *World News*. 13.00: *World News*. 13.15: *World News*. 13.30: *World News*. 13.45: *World News*. 14.00: *World News*. 14.15: *World News*. 14.30: *World News*. 14.45: *World News*. 15.00: *World News*. 15.15: *World News*. 15.30: *World News*. 15.45: *World News*. 16.00: *World News*. 16.15: *World News*. 16.30: *World News*. 16.45: *World News*. 17.00: *World News*. 17.15: *World News*. 17.30: *World News*. 17.45: *World News*. 18.00: *World News*. 18.15: *World News*. 18.30: *World News*. 18.45: *World News*. 19.00: *World News*. 19.15: *World News*. 19.30: *World News*. 19.45: *World News*. 20.00: *World News*. 20.15: *World News*. 20.30: *World News*. 20.45: *World News*. 21.00: *World News*. 21.15: *World News*. 21.30: *World News*. 21.45: *World News*. 22.00: *World News*. 22.15: *World News*. 22.30: *World News*. 22.45: *World News*. 23.00: *World News*. 23.15: *World News*. 23.30: *World News*. 23.45: *World News*. 24.00: *World News*.

BBC 2
08.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 08.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 09.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 09.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 10.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 10.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 11.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 11.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 12.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 12.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 13.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 13.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 14.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 14.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 15.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 15.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 16.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 16.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 17.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 17.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 18.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 18.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 19.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 19.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 20.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 20.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 21.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 21.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 22.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 22.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 23.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 23.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 24.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*.

BBC Prime
08.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 08.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 09.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 09.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 10.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 10.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 11.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 11.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 12.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 12.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 13.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 13.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 14.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 14.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 15.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 15.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 16.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 16.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 17.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 17.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 18.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 18.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 19.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 19.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 20.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 20.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 21.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 21.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 22.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 22.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 23.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 23.30: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*. 24.00: *Open University: The Emergence of the Modern World*.

BBC World
08.00: *World News*. 08.30: *World News*. 09.00: *World News*. 09.30: *World News*. 10.00: *World News*. 10.30: *World News*. 11.00: *World News*. 11.30: *World News*. 12.00: *World News*. 12.30: *World News*. 13.00: *World News*. 13.30: *World News*. 14.00: *World News*. 14.30: *World News*. 15.00: *World News*. 15.30: *World News*. 16.00: *World News*. 16.30: *World News*. 17.00: *World News*. 17.30: *World News*. 18.00: *World News*. 18.30: *World News*. 19.00: *World News*. 19.30: *World News*. 20.00: *World News*. 20.30: *World News*. 21.00: *World News*. 21.30: *World News*. 22.00: *World News*. 22.30: *World News*. 23.00: *World News*. 23.30: *World News*. 24.00: *World News*.

Radio 4
07.00-08.00: *News*. 08.00: *World News*. 08.30: *World News*. 09.00: *World News*. 09.30: *World News*. 10.00: *World News*. 10.30: *World News*. 11.00: *World News*. 11.30: *World News*. 12.00: *World News*. 12.30: *World News*. 13.00: *World News*. 13.30: *World News*. 14.00: *World News*. 14.30: *World News*. 15.00: *World News*. 15.30: *World News*. 16.00: *World News*. 16.30: *World News*. 17.00: *World News*. 17.30: *World News*. 18.00: *World News*. 18.30: *World News*. 19.00: *World News*. 19.30: *World News*. 20.00: *World News*. 20.30: *World News*. 21.00: *World News*. 21.30: *World News*. 22.00: *World News*. 22.30: *World News*. 23.00: *World News*. 23.30: *World News*. 24.00: *World News*.

Radio 1

08.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 08.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 09.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 09.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 10.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 10.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 11.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 11.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 12.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 12.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 13.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 13.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 14.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 14.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 15.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 15.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 16.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 16.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 17.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 17.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 18.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 18.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 19.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 19.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 20.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 20.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 21.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 21.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 22.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 22.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 23.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 23.30: *Radio 1 Breakfast*. 24.00: *Radio 1 Breakfast*.

Radio 2
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Radio 3
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Rejected Kiriyenko set for new Duma vote

James Meek in Moscow

SERGEI KIRIYENKO began to look less like a clever junior accountant and more like the second-in-command of Russia yesterday when he faced down a hostile parliament to win greater support than expected in his first, unsuccessful attempt to be confirmed as prime minister.

Just under a third of the State Duma's 450 deputies — 143 — backed Mr Kiriyenko, aged 35, who needs at least 226 votes to be approved. President Boris Yeltsin immediately renominated the former banker, who will submit to a fresh vote next week.

As prime minister he would take over the running of Russia and command of its armed forces if Mr Yeltsin died or became incapacitated. At present it is not clear who is second in line.

'I insist on the candidacy of Kiriyenko... he thinks fast and he counts well'

"I'd expected less support," the acting prime minister said after the vote. Earlier in the day Mr Yeltsin had said he would not be proposing an alternative candidate.

"I insist on the candidacy of Kiriyenko. He is a professional manager who can work as part of a team, he shuns self-promotion and cheap populism... he thinks fast and counts well," the president said in his weekly radio address.

Addressing the Duma before the vote, Mr Kiriyenko was confident as he repeated last week's message that the Asian financial crisis and the collapse in world oil prices had destroyed the tiny economic growth registered at the end of last year.

He warned that foreign debts could strangle the budget by 2003, that the unpaid wages crisis was getting worse and that the state faced a monthly tax shortfall of 24 per cent.

"People have lost faith in government. It's a lack of faith in tomorrow among ordinary people, among civil servants, and among investors. It's a crisis of morale," he said.

As he answered deputies' questions, Mr Kiriyenko demonstrated an impressive grasp of government policy and of Russia's problems which contrasted sharply with the rambling, oblique vagueness of Mr Yeltsin and his former prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Speaking before the vote, the Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, said Mr Kiriyenko had some interesting ideas, but the Communists would vote against him.

"I know of no political forces which would enable him to realise his programme for that depends on the will of the president and his circle," he said.

The size of the vote in favour of Mr Kiriyenko was a blow to the credibility of opposition parties which had lined up earlier in the day to insist that their members would never back the earnest young technocrat.

Even assuming all members of the pro-government Our Home is Russia, all non-aligned deputies and everyone from the centrist Russian Regions factions supported Mr Kiriyenko, he would not have received 143 votes.

Suspicion fell on Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's ultra-nationalist LDPR which, until the last minute, had intended not to support the president's pick, and even the Communists, whose plan to physically prevent party members from voting fell by the wayside.

Hopes will be high in the Kremlin that Mr Kiriyenko may win his second attempt to be confirmed, although a third vote can be taken before Mr Yeltsin gets the opportunity to dissolve the Duma and call fresh elections.

In turn, deputies will be looking for some concessions from the president and Mr Kiriyenko in terms of ministerial jobs for party members. But the acting prime minister ruled out any horse-trading yesterday.

"There's no point in yielding. If I do, the government will not be a working team," he said.



Jarek, a 12-year-old Romanian accordion player, regales commuters on the Paris Métro yesterday with traditional French songs. He is part of a wider revival of the 'poor man's piano' on the French music scene, as the accordion makes a comeback both at old-style balls and in techno mixes at stylish clubs. PHOTOGRAPH: JACQUES BRINON

Black and white economies divide Europe

Private view

Martin Walker

IT IS almost 20 years since Italy celebrated the sorpasso, that proud moment when its national wealth, as measured by gross domestic product, overtook Britain's. It was done at a stroke, simply by giving a notional value to the hitherto uncounted black economy.

There was less fuss in 1994 when the European Union's own GDP figures, given in euros, showed that Britain was once again ahead of the Italians. But there ought to be a fuss now, as the latest official estimates of the EU's black economy show that Italy has probably taken a commanding lead over Britain.

The explanation, again, is what Europe ominously calls *l'economie occulte*. Up to

26 per cent of the Italian economy is off the books. The highest estimate for Britain is 13 per cent, much of it accounted for by car boot sales and cash-only plumbers, builders, cleaning ladies, and the like.

The Italians, it must be stressed, are not alone. Their economy is about as black as the Spaniards'. But Italy pales to grey compared with Greece, where up to 35 per cent of the economy is off the books.

Think of the bold British plumber, driving off to a Greek or Italian holiday with a wallet full of used crinkles, staying in unregistered guest houses, eating in cafes that never see a taxman, and coming home with his van sagging under the weight of cheap French beer and Belgian rolling tobacco.

It is an image of Euro-prosperity to infuriate the authorities and affront the majority of working people who pay as they earn.

The scale of the black economies of Spain, Greece and Italy should annoy them even more, because it amounts to a gigantic fraud on the rest of Europe. All three are big net beneficiaries of the EU. Their contributions are calculated on their GDP figures and VAT receipts. The bigger their black economy, the less of their fair share they pay.

In short, there is now hard evidence to support the caricature of the EU as a machine to take money from the (relatively) law-abiding north and give it to the dodgy south. Its significance is greater because the EU is facing a cash crunch.

THE Germans, who pay about two-thirds of the net contribution to the EU budget, have insisted that their share must be reduced. The British were warned firmly at last month's informal meeting of finance ministers in York that Lady Thatcher's famous rebate

could not continue. And the vast EU bill for absorbing the new east European members is still to be paid.

This will raise new questions about the probity and rigour of, for example, the Polish and Hungarian tax systems. Bear in mind that under their old communist systems, the black economies were a matter of self-respect and economic survival. And bear in mind also — as this week's EU report on undeclared work says — that the black economy is a rational response to burdensome tax rates and over-regulated labour markets.

Oddly enough, the euro may provide a solution. The single currency is only cosmetically about common banknotes. Its real purpose is to solidify Europe's single market by imposing a common monetary policy, which will dictate the amount of money made available and the amount we have to pay to borrow it. In turn

this will inevitably lead to a common fiscal policy, co-ordinating the proportion of our incomes that governments take from us.

HARMONISING the European tax rates, under the current system, will be an accounting and computing challenge to dwarf the little local difficulty of the millennium bug. But if the opportunity is taken to change the tax system, the black economy could be wiped out overnight.

The trick would be to tax not incomes, profits or pay-rolls, but transactions. This would not be a simple sales tax, which hits the poor more because they pay a far higher proportion of their income through the cash till.

It would have to be a tax on every transaction, from bank deposits to investments, from pay cheques to pensions, from buying a beer to getting money from the cash machine

to pay the plumber. It would be, in effect, a tax on the velocity of the economy as a whole.

The technology, in the shape of the gigantic electronic net which already processes almost all financial and retail transactions, is just about in place. It could permit a tax system which automatically deducts, say, 1 per cent of every transaction over the net — and mean all other taxes can be abolished.

The electronic net treats the economy as a commons, for which we all pay the same proportional entrance fee before using it. The rich, who use it more for their investments and dividends and other manipulations, will pay more.

But it can cope with the cash-only plumber and the Greek waiter and the "unemployed" Spanish handyman because it picks off his bit of tax every time he enters the commons to spend his money. That would be a *sorpasso* everyone could celebrate.

Church paper joins attack on gays as paedophiles

John Hooper in Rome

THE leader of Italy's far right, Gianfranco Fini, has won the backing of spokesmen for the Roman Catholic Church for a remark he made this week linking homosexuality to paedophilia.

On a television chat show on Wednesday Mr Fini said: "A declared homosexual cannot be a schoolteacher."

Predictably, the comment prompted outrage in the gay community and on the left. What was less expected was the endorsement Mr Fini's views won from the Church and general public.

A column the next day in the newspaper *Avvenire*, which is owned by the Italian bishops, congratulated Mr

Finì on "scoring a hit". It said: "Those who are protesting either have not understood or do not want to understand."

Yesterday *Avvenire* toned down its support, but stopped well short of withdrawing it. It said he was only referring to "declared" homosexuals who "use the authority of a master to teach that it is the natural and sole truth".

The Rome daily *La Repubblica* published a poll yesterday which found that 47 per cent of those questioned supported Mr Fini's approach.

Gay rights activists have repeatedly said the root cause of the Italians' pronounced intolerance of homosexuals is the respect they accord to the social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Shock treatment for Paris pigeons

Jon Henley in Paris

SAINTS and gargoyles, angels, prophets and kings: all will be relieved. As part of a clean-up operation, the cathedral of Notre-Dame is to purge its statues of generations of pigeon droppings, and then electrify them to discourage future visitations.

"It's a simple but effective system," said Pascal Comber of Sertep, which stands for Research and Implementation of Techniques for Banishing Pigeons Ltd. "We install short stainless steel rods, invisible from a distance, which carry a small electric charge. They're not fatal, but pigeons hate them."

The cathedral's statues, some of which date back to the 14th century, have suffered for years from the ravages of Paris' rampant pigeon population. Many are now badly disfigured, said Bernard Ronquerie, a senior architect at the city's historic monuments commission, which is in charge of the renovations.

"The effect of pigeon droppings is shocking," he said. "Not only does it look unattractive, in some cases there's so much guano you can barely make out the faces." Droppings generate nitrates that eat into the stone. "We had to do something," he added.

Starting with the cathedral's west-facing walls, hundreds of statues and carvings are to be cleaned by hand using spatulas and solvents. All pigeon nests found will be destroyed.

"The work is complicated by a previous anti-pigeon campaign that didn't work," he said. "Fifteen years ago we tried coating the statues with a special repellent. Unfortunately it only worked for a year, and it stained half the carvings black."

Originally completed in 1330 but extensively altered during the 17th century, Notre-Dame was wrecked during the Revolution and last restored in the 1850s.

One of the masterpieces of church architecture, it is visited by six million people a year.



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سكيا من الامم

Red Richards

Gentle man of jazz

COURTLY in manner, soft spoken, and invariably described as "the perfect gentleman", the jazz pianist Red Richards was midway through a version of *From Sambo* when he collapsed and died in a New York restaurant, aged 85.

Born in Brooklyn, Richards moved to Harlem with his family and was introduced early on to the rent-party culture then prevalent. "Sometimes there might be four different apartments in the same building that had piano players, and those guys would play for days," he recalled.

Richards encountered Fats Waller and Willie "the Lion" Smith at these events and also witnessed Art Tatum's first Harlem visit. Thus he abandoned his classical studies to develop his own jazz style, staying faithful to the two-handed approach and coloured by the influence of Earl Hines. The combination of rhythmic drive with fresh variation served him well.

Richards's real start came with Skeets Tolbert's Gentlemen of Swing, a jump band which paralleled Louis Jordan, and recorded for Decca. He stayed for three years but, when the Floyd Ray Big Band came through New York, he jumped on board and made it to California, where he enlisted in the US Army — while still sitting in at local sessions.

In 1945, he joined Tab Smith's orchestra, which featured Smith's peachy alto within a peppy rhythm and blues style, and was the house band at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom.

In the 1950s, Richards moved to Boston where he crossed over to play Dixieland jazz with Bob Wilber, Jimmy McPartland and Bobby Hackett. He also appeared briefly with Sidney Bechet in 1951. In 1953, clarinetist Mezz Mezzrow enlisted him in a band — which included trumpeter



Red Richards... a master of rhythmic drive and fresh variations

Buck Clayton — for a European tour, culminating in a period in Italy as backing group for Frank Sinatra.

Richards then spent a four-year stint with the Chicagoan cornetist Muggsy Spanier, whose free-wheeling traditional group travelled continuously. He was the only black member of the band, and Richards found Spanier supportive in the face of

prejudice. A decade of success then followed with the dixie-to-swing Saints and Sinners, an outfit which Richards co-led with trombonist Vic Dickenson. This bright unit recorded often, made a couple of European trips — omitting Britain — and kept a ready home in Canada.

Thereafter, Richards concentrated on work in and around New York, leading a trio at the Crawdaddy club, playing relief piano at Eddie Condon's, taking solo gigs in Japan and Canada, making frequent visits to Europe, and building a substantial discography, most rewardingly on Saville.

He appeared in London at Pizza on the Park in the 1980s, impressing listeners with his measured way with standards, and vocalising agreeably in husky

fashion. Richards deserved wider recognition, but he was highly valued by his contemporaries and jazz insiders. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, to whom he was married for 55 years.

Peter Vacher

Charles Coleridge "Red" Richards, jazz pianist and vocalist, born October 19, 1912; died March 12, 1998

Face to Faith

Why Jesus is not the body in question

Timothy Radcliffe

I WOKE up briefly on the flight to Sao Paulo to see James Bond fighting for his life. Tough men in black were showering him with bullets, but none of my fellow passengers seemed that worried. We all know that James is invulnerable. Sometimes it looks as if he has been killed, but 10 minutes later he is back again, shooting from the hip. Sure enough, when I next woke up, he was floating on a raft with a beautiful woman, ignoring the efforts of the Royal Navy to rescue him.

Some early Christians were tempted to think of the Resurrection of Jesus in much the same way: the ultimate escape trick. Jesus's enemies could not get him. They appeared to win, but three days later he was back.

The first known representation of the crucifixion by Christians is on the door of the church in Rome where I live, St Sabina on the Aventine, built in 432AD. It took that long for Christians to dare to represent what the gospels say clearly, that the man whom we worship really died. Death got him.

What then of the Resurrection? What happened to Jesus's body? Every Easter morning, Christians celebrate the Resurrection by re-enacting what Jesus did on the night before he died, when he ate with his disciples. That is the only way to talk about what happened to his body when he rose. His friends were about to sell him, pretend that they never knew him, or just run away. His body was to be handed over to his enemies.

But Jesus made the strangest claim. He took bread and gave it to them and said: "This is my body and I give it to you." He made a gift of the body that was to be sold; the body that was to be destroyed he gave as the covenant of a new community. That is what happened on Easter morning: it was the triumph over all that destroys human community.

This may look like a cop-out. Christians make an interesting claim about a man ris-

ing from the dead, yet when they are pressed, they produce woolly statements about the victory of love. But I am not being evasive. One cannot get at what is most important about the body by describing the human anatomy. Of course, it is essential that we have stomachs and livers and lungs, but describing them does not tell us what it means for me to be alive, as this body. To do that, I must talk about my capacity to speak, to relate, and to love others.

So we get at the heart of the claim for the bodily resurrection, by re-enacting the Last Supper, and the victory that it undermines human love. I cannot describe the physiological transformation of Jesus's body, but that does not matter. It would miss the point.

The second thing that the Last Supper teaches us is that the Resurrection is not just a

James Bond offers us a very poor substitute.

The Resurrection is not just a rather vague claim about what happens when we die. We get some foretaste of what it means whenever we come across small triumphs over hatred, despair and death. Let me give just a few examples, which I have seen in the last few months.

I am writing these words in an isolated village called Campo Dos, in Colombia, near the Venezuelan border. This is an area of war between the guerrillas and the paramilitary groups. Every day the peasants are killed in the struggle to control the cocaine fields. We have just held a meeting with the young of the parish, who are trying to bring some hope to the people, who feel abandoned and without a future. In a moment, we will celebrate the Eucharist.

A young Dominican friar explained to me that he has not published the event. Three months ago, the local bishop was kidnapped. In these young people's refusal to give in to despair, I see what it means to re-enact the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples.

In February, I just happened to be in Baghdad when it seemed that, at any moment, American and British planes might appear over the city and drop their bombs. The Iraqi Dominican friars and sisters seemed less concerned than I was as to whether death might come in the next few days. They told me that they had lived with death for many years; the daily slaughter caused by the embargo.

For them, there was only a more fundamental question, which is whether all these human lives had any meaning, and whether, in the end, we may dare to hope. It was that hope that we celebrated together when we remembered what Jesus did before he died, and shared our belief in the resurrection of the dead.

Timothy Radcliffe is the Master of the Order of Preachers, the Dominicans

A Country Diary

NORTH PEMBROKESHIRE: Brynryan village no longer has a shop. The post office has been taken in by someone else, but only for 10 hours a week. No one can remember such a time. The farmer, who started trading in farm necessities from his house, built the shop in 1914 of local stone. You can still see the hollow in the common where it came from — light coloured bricks for the corners and round the windows. The front door is in a single-storey extension at the side, whilst the grand, central front-door opens into the shop. The first wooden shelves still stand. The counter has an inlaid brass rule, so that lengths of mate-

rial could be measured out. There were big jars of sweets; in the summer, with the door open, you could hear them rattling into the scales. The couple, who ran the shop and post office, are genial and discreet. Sooner or later, we met everyone in there and chatted. Our loss is immeasurable.

The village lost its school long ago, but retains its chapel, built in 1890 as the first independent chapel in North Pembrokeshire. It has the traditional front of two doors with windows in between. Inside is a peaceful calm, lovingly nurtured by its members. It lifts your spirit.

AUDREY INNSCH

Helen Jenkins

Aunty's compassionate child

IN the feverishly ambitious world of television journalism, it is difficult to find people who consistently value friendship and humanity above personal ambition. Helen Jenkins, who has died aged 52, was among that rare breed.

During her career at the BBC, which spanned nearly 25 years, she had plenty of opportunity to succumb to the pursuit of the ego. Her work as a senior producer took her to some of the more glamorous and competitive shows. Tonight, Nationwide, Panorama and Newsnight among them. But Helen never allowed jealousy, where she ran the complicated production desk with steady determination. Woe beside any accountant or flaky manager who tried to pull the wool

earth and practical. She was the kind of person who turned up with a host of cardboard boxes if you were moving house. On one occasion, she announced to a female friend going through personal difficulties that it was time to cheer herself up by decorating her front room. Sure enough, a couple of days later she turned up on the doorstep wielding a paintbrush.

Despite her low-key, practical approach, Helen was no pushover and she relished a good scrap. Before illness prompted her to take early retirement from the BBC, her last port of call was the Correspondent programme, where she ran the complicated production desk with steady determination. Woe beside any accountant or flaky manager who tried to pull the wool

the record, she mockingly confessed to belonging to two apparently dodgy societies: the Fairground Organ Preservation Society (lapsed) and the Afghan Hound Society (found now deceased).

She also inspired all around her to fight for quality programmes and not be fazed by seemingly overwhelming odds. Even when she was ill, she would deluge me with heaps of cuttings, suggesting a variety of story ideas. She cared passionately for the BBC and its role as public broadcaster.

This zest for life and continuity of purpose spilled over into her private pursuits. Helen was a dedicated sailor and spent a great part of her last eight years restoring and sailing her 40-year-old classic sloop, Bridani, named after a star visible in the southern hemisphere.

A real test for Helen came when she studied for maths O-level in her later years at the BBC. This proved to be a stiff challenge but she tackled it with typical gusto and determination. When she was in a bad mood in the office at the time, we all knew it had to do with logarithms and cosines, not struggling with the details of the latest story about apartheid in South Africa.

She said she would die with a clear conscience and did indeed keep her integrity and courage to the end. She is survived by her partner, David Gwyn Jones, and by the extended and loving family of her sister, Bronwen James.

Joan Bakewell writes: Helen Jenkins was one of the finest women who ever worked at the BBC, and she was my friend. She was also my producer for a time, reporting on the arts for Newsnight in the mid-1980s. Familiar with the more brutal matters of politics and international affairs, she was soon as easily familiar with the concerns of musicians, actors, writers and artists and set about telling their stories with the same commitment with which she did everything in her life.

She was a natural feminist, proud to be a woman and scornful of any implied sexism. She raised a quizzical eyebrow when the editor of Newsnight had to get special managerial permission to send her to war-torn Lebanon. Helen arrived in Beirut just before the Shatila and Sabra massacres and sent back reports of outstanding integrity and clarity.

With her unwavering sense of justice and trust, she was enraged by petty-mindedness. On one occasion, back from some tropical hell-hole, where she'd been working 15 hours a day reporting terrible events, she found the cost of a glass of lager had been cut from her expenses. Playing by the rules, she called for an official briefing as to what she could or could not claim. She then instructed each Newsnight reporter as to how to submit their expenses. That glass of lager cost the BBC dear.

As a woman, she had little regard for appearances, preferring ease to elegance. She regarded looks as unimportant and ignored her own. In fact, she had the sweet face of a Botticelli, though no-one would call her sweet. She did once, when reporting the Edinburgh Festival, buy a pretty white dress and try a little make-up. That same night, in the bucolic good humour of the occasion, someone dashed a glass of red wine across it. Helen enjoyed the joke and went back instantly to comfortable clothes.

Those close to her knew of her boundless generosity, which reached out to anyone she saw to be in need. She championed the traditional values of public service broadcasting and believed that ethics, rather than accountability, should take priority in public affairs. Her values were surely the ones that matter.

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Helen Jenkins, television producer, born March 19, 1946; died April 6, 1998

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The Guardian

Weekend birthdays

THERE'LL be no end of slobbery kisses for singer Lisa Stansfield 33 today. First, from Ian Devaney, her long-term boyfriend and musical collaborator, more from their shockingly spoilt dogs, Turpin, the whelpound, and Doleen, the mongrel. Then there is her family in Rochdale, the "dreary" town she said she'd never leave but quit four years ago for Dublin. Also on the good wish trail, Jimmy Nail, perhaps, or Paul Monty star Hugo Speer, who's been working with her on *Swing*, her first film (she's got over the disappointment of being beaten for the lead role in *Indecent Proposal* by Demi Moore). But will she be hearing from ex-Pogue Shane MacGowan, her famously un-

sober drinking companion? In between knocking out hits like *All Around The World* and *All Woman*, she once gave him a bloody nose. His crime? He wanted her to read some poetry. As she once sang, "I may not be a lady ..."

Today's other birthdays: Karen Briggs, judo champion, 35; Viscount Buckmaster, Arabist, 77; Sir Raymond Carr, Spanish historian, 79; John Cyser, Labour MP, 34; Gervase de Peyer, clarinetist, 72; Olive Epton, scriptwriter, 68; James Ferman, former director, British Board of Film Classification, 68; Jill Gascoine, actress, 61; Georgina Godley, fashion designer, 42; Joel Grey, actor, 56; Lewis Jones, rugby player, 67; Dr Roger Knight, chief curator, National Maritime Museum, 64; Lorenzo, restaurateur, 70; Derek Martin, actor, 65; Dame Avril Poole, former chief nursing officer, Department of Health, 64; Richard Wainwright, former Liberal MP, 80; Prof Michael Wright, mechanical engineer, chairman, 600 Group, 51.

Tomorrow's birthdays: Alan Ayckbourn, playwright, 53; Raymond Barre, economist, 74; Jeremy Beadle, television presenter, 50; Bill Bryden, actor and theatre director, 56; Montserrat Caballé, opera singer, 65; Paul Cassidy, singer, 49; Risper Gray, actress, 59; Lionel Hampton, vibraphonist, 89; Dwe Kitzinger, former president, Templeton College, Oxford, 70; Hardy Kruger, actor, 70; Bryan Magee, philosopher, writer, 68; Gillian Merron, Labour MP, 38; Dr Hilary Nicolle, educationist, 38; Carlos Renteria, grand prix driver, 66; George Robertson, MP, Secretary of State for Defence, 52; Graham Rose, cricketer, 34; Dr Wendy Savage, obstetrician and gynaecologist, 63.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Leonard Doyle: An apology. An article headed, *Anthrax foibles*, on the Comment page of the Guardian, Page 18, March 25, dealt with stories "planted" in British newspapers by the security services. In particular, it mentioned the "clamour" started by the London Independent over allegations that the Boonians had shelled their own people in Sarajevo in a move to enlist international sympathy for the Muslim cause, and it held this up as an example of a "plant". Although the author of the 1992 Independent report was not named in the article, he was correctly identified by some as Leonard Doyle, who is now the foreign news editor of the Observer. It might thus

have been wrongly inferred that Mr Doyle was shamed with the suggestion that he was an agent of the security services. We unreservedly accept that this was not the case, and that Mr Doyle's Sarajevo story had no connection with British intelligence, and we apologise to Mr Doyle. Mr Doyle has also received personal apologies from those involved.

The *Office of the Reader's Editor* is closed over Easter. It reopens on Tuesday. Readers may then telephone between 11 am and 5 pm, 0171 220 9555. Meanwhile letters can be mailed to 113, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

A blessed Good Friday

At last Northern Ireland's people can glimpse peace

THESE men and women did noble work. Tired after 30 hours without sleep, their fatigue from 30 years of war proved greater. In the name of the people of Northern Ireland, they reached out to their deadlier rivals — and made peace. It took the deaths of more than 3,000 people, the serious wounding of some 30,000 others, but yesterday the two sides of that long and bloody conflict joined together to declare, "Enough."

The Easter snow never let up, the air outside the Castle buildings stayed bitter and frigid — but still Sinn Féin's chairman described it as "a beautiful day." And so it was. Inside the Stormont building, men whose adult lives had been filled with talk of armed struggle and no surrender were now sharing a joke, paying warm tribute to each other. Usually hard-faced men came to speak, only to find a catch in their voice. One delegation was spotted in the middle of the night, its members quietly hugging each other.

The emotion was earned, as was the

universal declaration that Stormont had witnessed history in the making. There are important caveats. But no one should lose sight of the scale of the achievement. After three decades of conflict — and an antagonism that has endured for centuries — Unionism and nationalism, loyalty and republicanism, Protestants and Catholics may finally have found a way to live together. This is no mere pact between governments, nor some worthy accord among moderates: it is not a re-run of Sunningdale or the Anglo-Irish agreement. This is an agreement backed by those who represent the men of violence, standing at opposite extremes. Gerry Adams was smiling yesterday, apparently with the blessing of the IRA army council — but so was Gary McMichael and David Irvine, the men who speak for the convicted killers of hardline loyalism. It is as if the Middle East peace process had brought together Hamas and the Jewish settlers of the West Bank: it is an extraordinary feat of diplomacy. The politicians

yesterday counselled against euphoria, rightly warning that the task of reconciliation has only just begun. Prudence would suggest waiting a while before handing out plaudits. Even so, it seems right to credit those who pulled off what so many — until very recently — said was impossible. In Northern Ireland, John Hume, Gerry Adams and David Trimble have all earned a place in history. Mr Hume for having the courage to stand with Sinn Féin early, encouraging them to choose politics over warfare. Mr Adams led the republican movement away from violence and towards a compromise on its core doctrine of a united Ireland. Sinn Féin has now formally accepted the partition of Ireland — an historic break. Mr Trimble proved the most obstinate negotiator in the last moments yesterday, but he showed political strength, too — persuading a party which has made intransigence into an article of faith to compromise. The Ulster Unionists' acceptance of the new ministerial council of the north and south grants the Republic a governmental stake in Northern Ireland for the first time. Until now Unionism has regarded the South as an alien, if not enemy power.

Outside the province, London and Dublin can allow themselves a weekend of congratulation. Bertie Aherne buried his

mother on Thursday, then headed to Belfast for two sleepless days cajoling and arm-twisting the parties towards an agreement. Tony Blair was pivotal, luring David Trimble back to the peace table just when the entire effort seemed doomed. All that was possible thanks to the dogged, indefatigable work of his secretary of state, Mo Mowlam. Her human touch attracted much criticism these last months, but now she is vindicated: she succeeded where every predecessor had failed. Thanks in part to her, Tony Blair has won the prize that had eluded every British PM since Gladstone. It is the crowning achievement of his first year in office.

ALL THE participants were lucky, too, in their chairman. George Mitchell's years of senate deal-making stood him in good stead, as did the presence of his two, largely unused co-chairs from Canada and Finland. It helped that the trio was backed by an American president who believed in the Northern Ireland peace process before almost anyone else. Bill Clinton took a lot of flak for granting Gerry Adams a US visa in 1994 — a move which, with hindsight, seems only to have helped. John Major and Albert Reynolds authored the first framework document which made yesterday possible.

The deal may be done, but peace is never a done deal. The lesson of peace processes elsewhere — whether in the Middle East or South Africa — is that the signature is just the start. There will be opposition, whether through Ian Paisley's planned No campaign for the referendum on May 22 or the rejectionist violence, likely to be committed by those paramilitaries who stayed outside. The alphabet soup of terror — from INLA to the LVF, CAC to CIRA — will be determined to break public confidence. The peacemakers must stand firm.

There will be challenges from within, too — starting with conflicting interpretations of what the 67-page document's details all mean. Several of the parties must now have the plan approved by executives and members. Some Unionists might balk at the early release of prisoners; some republicans may recoil at the return of decommissioning. Both sides are bound to find it hard to sit together with old enemies: imagine it, a Unionist and a Sinn Féiner, side-by-side in an Ulster cabinet.

Failure is a possibility. But so, now, is success. The people of Northern Ireland at last have an opportunity to live their lives in peace. It is a time for gratitude, and even the odd private prayer. For this was a blessed Good Friday.

Letters to the Editor

Miscellany: from fact to fiction

I AM old enough to be Daniel Parker's granny (Marmite diet baffles baffles, April 9), but we share an addiction. For me to start the day without Marmite laddled on anything is unthinkable. I consume a 250g jar in eight days, which works out at 37.5g per day. Marmite-eating lifetime. Daniel has only been on Marmite for 11 years — the next 53 could produce five healthy children if he follows my example. Wendy Morris, Birmingham.

SOME of us buffons are not at all baffled by Daniel's "successful marmite sandwich diet." His sandwiches will provide him with energy containing twice the protein he would have got as a new-born infant from his mother's milk. With milk and orange juice as well, that's serious food. Joe Millward, Professor of Nutrition, University of Surrey.

WONDER how the taxpayers of crime-ridden Los Angeles feel about resources being wasted on tackling victimless crimes such as those involving George Michael (Police deny setting trap for British pop singer, April 10)? I was a Californian I would demand to know why my money was being used so inappropriately. Jonathan Beadle, London.

WHILE your interview with Kevin MacKenzie in Media Guardian (Cracking the Mirror, April 6) was riveting, I am puzzled by his sudden strange obsession with Dudley. Being Dudley born and bred, I can assure Mr MacKenzie we have yet to attain the status to warrant a Bishop, and not since the Industrial Revolution have we made nuts and bolts. Martin Dunn, Editor, Associated New Media, Bristol.

THE Royal Automobile Club should not try to fool their many loyal members into believing that they are motivated by genuine concern for its welfare (RAC "inner circle" set for £40,000 pay-outs, April 9). If this demagogic takes place, it will merely demonstrate that, once again, personal greed has triumphed over a decent and well-established society. Lord Saffron of Garston, House of Lords.

PLEASE could you elaborate on the advice contained in G2 (Milk and mummy, April 7). The writer suggested that a working mother's breastmilk supply can be maintained if she "partially breastfeeds" her. What beast does she recommend? Carla Evans, Stroud, Gloucestershire.

PRESUME that James Kennard (Letters, April 9) also keenly awaits the day when science will confirm the universe is only 6,000 years old, and that humankind was formed from clay and given the breath of life (Genesis 2:7). Rob Glover, Dewsbury, W. Yorks.

ON the printing of corrections, Peter Mapleson (Letters, April 10) writes: "I guess it is a matter of time before you print a correction before the mistake." Quite right, the Guardian is well known as the Newspaper for Tomorrow. James Hazan, London.

Not the world's favourite airline

QUITE a few things do not add up in your story, Fear and loathing on Flight 567 (April 9). I assume that once the horrible noises from under the floorboards had made themselves apparent to the flight deck crew, contingency arrangements would have been made within seconds to the best diversion routing. This is presumably why the aircraft did not continue climbing to FL310, as Geneva is only a little less than 150 miles away from Milan.

It is uncommon to have a totally uneventful flight; requests for changes in flight level are often made — due to sudden meteorological changes, for reasons of greater fuel economy. Most flight crews will report minor mechanical faults — in the air, either on their own company radio frequency to the airline HQ, or to the tower-approach

radio of their destination, if matters are more serious. If the public were privy to these routine daily conversations they would think twice about ever flying again.

On contacting Geneva Tower, the flight deck crew of BA 567 would have been handed over to the Geneva Approach radio frequency.

Why didn't emergency personnel plug in a mike/headset to talk directly to the flight deck, in the same way as ramp controllers do? At a pinch, the captain could have dialled the tower for instructions on a mobile phone. Something appears to have been very wrong somewhere. Did the plane develop a total loss of radio communication? Without ASMI (Aerodrome Surface Movement Indicator) radio communication, the airport would have ground to a halt. Graham Stocks, Quorn, Leics.

MY EXPERIENCE of British Airways reflects that in your article. Some while ago I was travelling from Hong Kong to London in an aircraft which lacked some in-seat services, including the crew call buttons. I felt ill during the flight and because I could not summon the crew, I got up to find someone. I fainted and suffered injuries which led to a permanent scar.

Efforts to get BA to acknowledge some responsibility for what happened proved impossible. Needless to say, I go to some lengths to avoid their flights these days. Michael Dempsey, London.

I TOO have experienced the extraordinary lack of language ability in BA staff. I returned from Lyon last Friday on flight 353. To the evident surprise of the cabin crew there were several

French passengers on board who spoke no English. This became a problem once it became clear that we were going to be late into Heathrow as there were several passengers who had to make onward connections to the US. I was sitting next to a woman travelling to visit her son in San Francisco. Her natural apprehension was made worse by a succession of announcements in English in which she recognised only the name of her destination. The cabin staff asked if I would mind carrying on the translation until we arrived, agreeing that it was "rather awful" that they had no personnel on board who could speak French. There was no transfer van to meet passengers and when I had to tell my neighbour that, even if she made the flight her luggage might not, she became truly distraught. It would have been helpful to have had

a bilingual member of BA's staff to reassure her. Bridget Patterson, Woodbridge, Suffolk.

THE worst level of in-flight service I have ever experienced was on a BA flight to Miami. The tattle-telling aircraft I have flown in was a BA plane en route to Warsaw. Tony Novak, Reading.

DR Victoria Walsh does seem to have had poor treatment at the hands of BA but I notice that the report said she contacted Virgin Atlantic for advice, who "told her to contact the Civil Aviation Authority". Knowing the strength of Richard Branson's public relations department and the rivalry between Virgin and BA, did the contact stop there? Bill Emmett, London.

Rapid rebuttal from Secretaries of State (both past and present)

GEORGE Monbiot's article about the New Transatlantic Marketplace (NTM) was, frankly, extraordinary (Market madness, April 9). His sweeping statements about its impact included the comment that "NTM negotiations have been conducted so far in convenient obscurity." The truth is that they haven't been conducted at all. They have not even begun. Even the concept is still under discussion.

In my speech to the Mansion House, I did indeed identify our wish to pursue open markets without jeopardising the environment, consumer safety or worker protection. The effort to reduce regulatory barriers to trade should differentiate between such protection and protectionism.

The aim of mutual recognition is to ensure that, where two national systems provide an equivalent level of protection but in a different way, exporters do not face an additional burden of duplicating their testing and certification procedures.

None of this should frighten anyone. If Mr Monbiot was going to quote my speech I am sorry he left out my reference to the international role of the World Government, not only in the establishment of the UN but in founding institutions like the GATT, (now the WTO), which set out to promote multilateral free trade. In the 1940s they saw this as a means to prevent a return of the slump and unemployment of the 1930s.

It is an honourable tradition, and one to which I am proud to belong. Margaret Beckett MP, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, London.

YOUR leader on crime and punishment (April 10) continues to fly in the face of facts. You correctly point out that the latest crime figures show a fall for the fifth consecutive year — the first time this has happened since records were first kept over 100 years ago.

The size of the fall, too, is unprecedented. Nearly a million fewer crimes were recorded in 1997 than in 1993. Yet you refuse to acknowledge the link between this achievement and the increase in the prison population during that period. The Home Office research to which you refer is based on a simple, and indiscriminate, correlation between imprisonment and all crimes (including those for which a sentence would be wholly inappropriate).

What has been happening over the last five years is more effective and better targeted policing (helped by some changes in the law) and more and better targeted use of imprisonment.

Chief constable after chief constable have testified to the extent to which imprisonment of professional prolific criminals has a direct impact on crime in their area. And research by Charles Murray in this country and the United States has demonstrated over a long period of time the inverse relationship between crime and the risk of imprisonment.

It is hardly surprising that ministers left their officials to brief the media after this week's figures. Even they could hardly claim they had anything to do with this undeniable success. Michael Howard MP, (Home Secretary 1993-97) House of Commons.

We have no choice on selection

IT WOULD be hard not to feel sympathy for a family unable to find a suitable school for their daughter. But disappointment for one child is balanced by the relief of acceptance for another.

Parents' ability to apply to a variety of schools means better schools are becoming over-subscribed. Every oversubscribed school is a selective school. If there are more applicants than places, the school must choose who to accept. It is absurd to talk of ending selection, unless you accept all children being directed to a particular school by bureaucratic diktat.

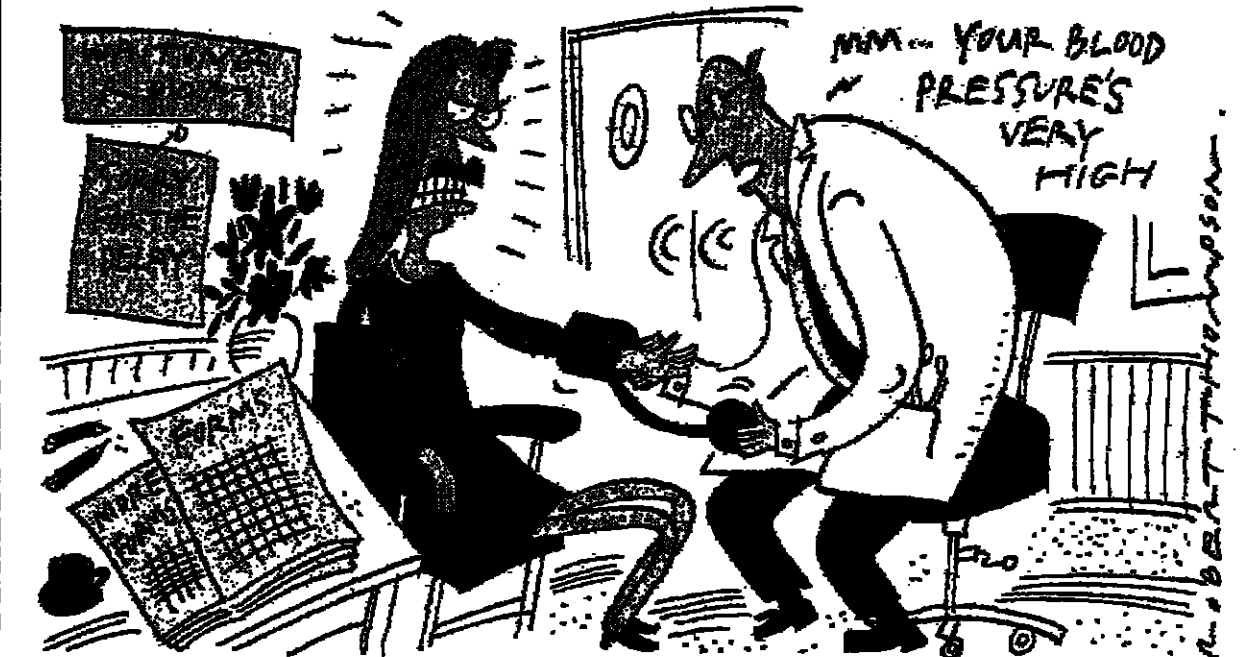
The issue is not whether selection should be permitted, but which type of selection

produces the best education for the most children.

Academic and aptitude selection attempts to match children with suitable schools, but cannot ensure properly for children who fail the tests. Sibling preference allows families to send all their children to the same school, but reduces the places available to others.

Geographical selection gives priority to children who live near a school, to the exclusion of children who live further away.

We urgently need a serious and open debate on the merits and drawbacks of different selection criteria. Stuart Lester, London.



If things go on in this vein, we'll stop giving blood

LAST week, I wrote my first Letter of complaint to my Regional Blood Transfusion Service (Blood service chief sacked, April 8). Along with dozens of other immensely tolerant donors, I witnessed a session grinded to a halt for almost half an hour because the only medical officer present was on the telephone.

For me, this was the culmination of several years of deterioration in the treatment of

donors, who now have to endure a cold, impersonal and highly intrusive process of repeated questioning and even longer waits to join the physical and moral elite now "permitted" to donate blood. I first donated blood in 1999 as an idealistic student inspired by Richard Titmuss's book, *The Gift Relationship*. Since then, I have made 40 donations, which I have considered to be part of my civic duty.

Donors are taken for granted and this is fine, so long as those donors have confidence in the management of the Service and the stewardship of the precious resource which they feel they are giving to save the lives of others. I am sure that confidence falters, as it has now done, what is left to encourage the giver and to reassure them that their gift is not being squandered? Nobody is obliged to donate blood.

Of course, there is a need for reasonable checks on the health of donors and the safety of donations, but donors are very responsible people who would not knowingly place anyone else at risk. They do not need to be constantly badgered and harried. It will only be by a concerted effort to provide a more sensitive and personal service to donors that confidence in the Blood Transfusion Service will be restored. Anne Worrall, Stone, Staffordshire.

Of women's affairs: political and personal

ERIN Pizzey rails against "vicious and bullying females" (Letters, April 9) in the early years of women's liberation. What a blast from the past. I was there, too, and recall her as often being a pain in the arse. However, as I recall, she was asked to leave the Women's Liberation Workshop because she went to the police and offered herself as an informer.

Not surprisingly, when her offer to the police came out, most women were outraged. "The decision to ask her to leave the workshop was taken only after an open and typically endless meeting."

As far as I know, no one else was ever formally asked to leave the workshop which was open to "all women" and had no membership forms.

Pizzey is still remembered by many as the founder of Chiswick Women's Aid. It would be a shame to let her ancient rant distort the reality of the past. Sue O'Sullivan, London.

I WAS amazed to find that, when I read out your amusing article on the allure doctors hold for women (Love is the Drug, G2, March 30) in the doctors' mess, it was immediately photocopied and stuck on the notice boards by junior male doctors whose egos had visibly expanded.

Could we not have another article on the allure of the professional female of our species to redress the imbalance? Dr Amanda Owen, London.

PLEASE tell fashion designer Antonio Berardi not to worry about his stolen collection of Size 8 clothes (Barrow boys' fashion scam, April 8). I am keeping the most vigilant eye on our local Mothercare. Anna Caswell, Preston, Lancashire.

SEE that there is a women's Army rank of Junior Under Officer. Do you think, in view of other military/legal affairs (Adultery no scandal, April 10), that this title needs some rethinking? Bob Bird, Great Missenden.

At least we now know why they are called jump jets. Tom Brown, St Albans, Herts.

New brooms for sweeping away the sleaze in town halls

PAUL Foot's piece about central government spending rules' effect on local government services (Shame on Labour, April 7), and your leader (Whitehall still rules, April 8) should make us think.

The double-edged imperative seems to be: provide for vulnerable people with inadequate resources, and carry the can for consequent limitations and poor quality. Across the country, committed people are doing just this.

Governments that insist on total central financial control should take responsibility for the results. Blame local government for the things it can do but does badly, but not for what it can't do. Better yet, give it the tools to do the job. Marcia Samuels, London.

REFORM of local government will be flawed without higher UK electoral turnout. As you say, at 40 per cent, they are among Europe's lowest.

Our problem is the absence of proportionality. Annual elections are not the solution. Happily, proportional voting systems are planned for regional, European and mayoral assemblies, plus the Commission remit for Westminster. Local government needs it just as much. Michael S Watson, London.

SANDWELL is one of the bottom 10 councils for educational results when it is in the top 10 for education spending.

Why does Sandwell, which spends huge amounts on health and social services, a socially deprived area?

How many other areas suffer the same lack of theatres, conference facilities, hotels, museums and art galleries?

Why does Sandwell encourage the ethnic arts while ignoring provision for the indigenous population? There is a lot of wealth generated in Sandwell. Without a sizeable middle class population there is no need for institutions like theatres and quality shops. So the area becomes socially deprived, the council's income per head of population decreases, and the problem is exacerbated.

Could it be attracting the middle classes to Sandwell would mean some councillors losing their seats? P Wade, West Midlands.

Saturday

Peace in our time-slot



Mark Lawson

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Saturday opinion

Peace in our time-slot

Mark Lawson

EARLIER this week, a producer on a BBC news and current affairs programme was talking to a colleague about plans for the coverage of Thursday night's Irish peace talks deadline. "You have to understand," said the producer, "that this could be peace in our time!" When the colleague said this remark was both a cliché and historically insensitive, the producer explained: "No, no, I mean, peace in our time-slot, peace in our air-time."

Peace in Our Time-Slot: the perfect title for any book about modern news-gathering. All major occurrences are now media events, but this week has offered one of the most extraordinary and revealing case-studies of journalism since last year's death of a princess.

The television coverage through Thursday evening until the notional midnight deadline and into Friday morning had no precedent in broadcasting history. The lack of concrete facts, the startling luridness between firm statements and instant retraction created a unique feeling of confusion.

The main reason for this is that there has never been a journalistic effort on this scale in the absence of anything actually happening. Although television journalism switches whenever possible these days to "rolling news" — in which the prepared schedule is abandoned and replaced by improvised reporting — there is generally a definite event at either end of the programme. This may be at the beginning: an American plane or a French car crashes and the implications are explored. Or the end: exhaustive coverage builds up to the result of a general election.

They kept trying to kidnap our Irish poet, then sending him back

On Thursday night, the event towards which all breathless journalism was heading — the intended make-or-break declaration at midnight — failed to happen: the clock was simply ignored. This resulted in the weird experience of completely storyless news broadcast, in which even the supply of roughly reliable rumour — on which so much rolling news depends — had been exhausted. What the surreal incoherence of the evening's coverage resembled was an election results programme in which there was a permanent risk of the revelation that the voting had failed to take place. Which, if you think about it, may be a perfect metaphor for the Irish peace process.

THE second interesting media aspect of the story in Belfast has been the success of Government's news management. Daily this week, the newspapers published without dissent the optimistic predictions of Blairite whippers of the prospects for a peace deal — despite the fact that public and private statements by many of the participants in the talks indicated extreme pessimism.

It can now be argued (at least at the time of writing on Friday evening) that the bullishness of the spin doctors has been justified by the signing. But it is part, the up-beat assessments of Alastair Campbell were tactical wishful thinking. The low expectations of the British and Irish populations when it comes to peace in Ireland had created the risk that failure of the talks would meet with a shrug. By constantly talking up the nearness of

peace, whatever the evidence, the government created a situation in which any last-minute wrecker of the settlement might be isolated and blamed. This surely added to pressure on the delegates.

Whether the media should so willingly have participated in this tactic by reporting the happy predictions with so little caution is another matter. During the Major-Reynolds peace initiative in 1994, the great Ulster journalist John Cole criticised the euphoria of the reporting, accusing the media of putting their hope for peace before a realistic assessment of its likelihood.

The journalism of desire has been much in evidence in recent days. Most worryingly, a sentimental technique perfected during the Diana mourning — in which news images are cut together to a piece of moving music — was widely practised on news programmes yesterday: with peace marches, orange marches, handshakes and funerals played in slow motion against celtic flute music.

WHILE just about justified in an ordinary — where at least the story is complete — this pop video approach is reckless when applied to an open-ended process. The style also comes close to a promo for the British and Irish governments.

The week, though, has produced three media images, apart from the final signing ceremony, which will be played in journalistic retrospectives for years ahead. The first is Tony Blair's sound-bite, "The hand of history is on our shoulder," which will perhaps seem then, as it feels now, a piece of mock-Churchillian gloss. It suggests that the prime minister's bite-writers were carried away by the success of this "People's Princess" phrase last September.

And, whatever happens, future generations will often view two eerie images from Thursday night: April snow outside Stormont Castle and the joyful silhouette of figures in the SDLP offices embracing behind blinds.

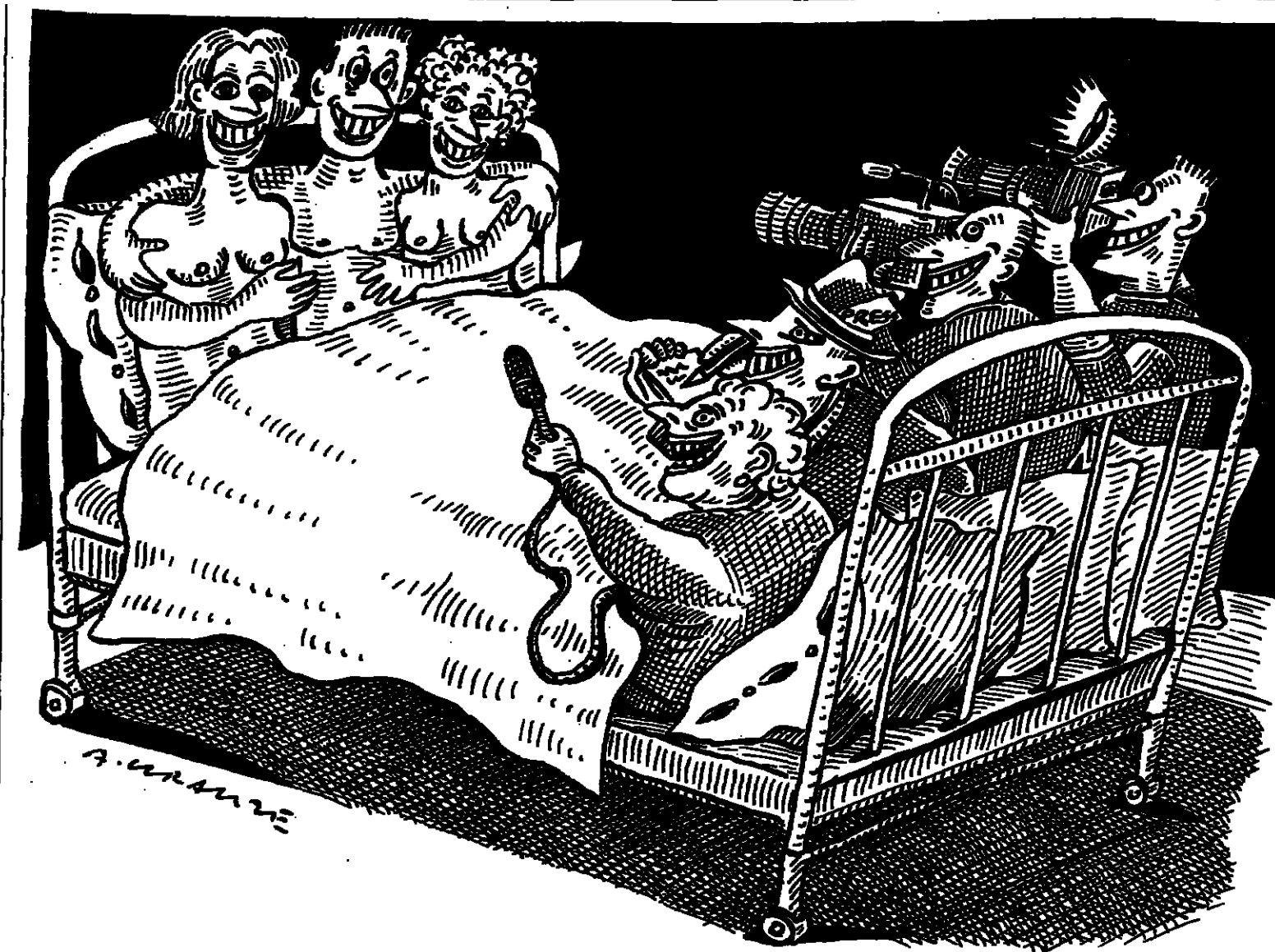
If peace comes, these images from its negotiation will remain peripheral. But, to pessimists, and those wary of the journalism of desire, it remains possible that the eventual result of the peace process will be in the media arena: Senator George Mitchell, the talks chairman, has, if he wishes — and he may well, given his loss of earnings during the two-year process — the chance to produce one of the most extraordinary books on the political process ever written.

My own media memoir — a pessimistic one — is this. I usually spend the hour leading up to Thursday midnight in a BBC television studio with, among others, the Irish poet Tom Paulin. Newsnight, occupy the next-door studio but there is little cross-border communication, because we are arts and they are news.

This week, though, they kept trying to kidnap our poet. There had been plans that Newsnight would "roll" on through the night to cover the Irish deadline. A call had gone out to all those of Irish descent within the media community and here was one of the most eloquent commentators on the conflict sitting on their doorstep.

Several times both before and after our programme — which was finally broadcast as normal despite contingency plans for interrupting the Woody Allen discussion to hand back to Belfast — they came for Tom, because the word from Ulster was that a deal was near. Soon they would return him to the Green Room (the alcohol and relaxation annex to the studio) because the rumour had proved untrue. On the Green Room television, there played first a black and white rerun of Sergeant Bilko, followed by the Skiing Forecast read by a Met Office man in a fluffy sweater.

But from this surreal media week, there is one image that will stay with me as a symbol of the luridness between fantasy and reality in this peace process and media coverage of it: the night Newsnight stole our Irish poet, then sent him back unharmed. No peace in our time-slot.



Baring all

Catherine Bennett



NOW that the distraction of Northern Ireland can be put to one side, will Tony Blair turn his attention to an equally complex, if marginally less pressing, matter: that of Della, Anthea and Grant? Should Della have taken Grant back? Did

Anthea deserve all she got? Or is Grant really the one to blame? Come on, Tony, speak up! Whose side are you on? Some may feel that Della's Dilemma is beneath prime ministerial notice, but Blair's swift and commanding response to the plight of a fictional Coronation Street character suggests that he is no less well-briefed on the contents of the Sun than he is on the Stormont negotiations, and probably aware of which of the two has been more eagerly debated by his voters.

He must know, then, that while he was away at the talks, most British tabloids were wholly preoccupied with Della Bovey's crushing of Anthea Turner. As the Ulster wranglings approached their deadline, with no agreement in sight, the Bovey-Turner resolution dominated every

tabloid front page. As Blair felt the hand of history tapping on his shoulder, readers were treated to front-page pictures of Bovey — her hand glued to an historic, brimming champagne glass. In the Mail, Lynda Lee Potter acclaimed Della's peace deal: "Triumphantly, she's out-manoeuvred Anthea at every turn," and awarded Anthea one of her celebrated wigs: "If you've spent a lifetime thinking mostly about about yourself... there comes a time when you have to pay a price." And not just in the tabloids. By now, all the broadsheets had joined in, with the Guardian thoughtfully supplying a list of the dramatic phrases: Paul Ross — "caught at the weekend snogging Caroline Aherne..." The Stormont deadline crept closer: in-depth analysis

of Della's Dilemma continued. Could the Bovey's marriage work, the Mail asked two experienced commentators. Yes, said Shyamana Pereira, revealing that, coincidentally, her own husband had run off 23 days after Della's No, said a man who had left his wife, and now regretted it. "I do not even flirt," he confided. What with this, George Michael, Lt Col Pople and Robin Cook, too, the historic week in Northern Ireland has coincided with a domestic explosion of orgasmic, record-breaking media money-parking. But before too much sympathy goes the way of Bovey, Pople, Ross, Michael and Cook, it seems worth pointing out that these domestic victims have all, in their own way, courted exposure, and even, in a couple of cases, actually invited the public to have a good peek.

'I shall not say,' said Harriet, 'how I became the Earl's mistress'. Where would reserve get her today?

Mrs Bovey, for example, believed that media interest in the doings of Anthea Turner could be used to her own advantage, and evidently considers the sacrifice of her private life well worth uncontested possession of Mr Bovey. Mrs Robin Cook the first, though subtler in her

methods, has nonetheless compromised her privacy with letters and articles on the subject of men and politicians — "Men of 50-plus," she knowledgeably writes, "regress emotionally." Still, her husband deserves no better: no-one compelled him to pose at Chevening with Gaynor, for all the world like Gainsborough's Mr and Mrs Andrews, nor to share the news that the updated version of Mrs Cook has made him happier than ever before.

"I shall not say," Harriet Wilson began her Memoirs, "why and how I became, at the age of 15, the mistress of the Earl of Craven." Where would we be, today, with such ungenerous reserve?

CERTAINLY baring of Annabel Heseltine's recent contributions, in which she says why and how she has become, at the age of 34, the fiancée of a plastic surgeon (careful, *plastic* shut, apparently). One has come to expect this kind of disclosure from professional columnists. But nowadays private individuals, perhaps taking Princess Diana as their model, are equally keen to disclose almost beyond recognition, lies behind the most egregious revelations.

Cosima Somerset recently wrote a long article about not being her father's daughter. Why? "I believe that by telling the truth, the secret will lose its toxic power and liberate us," she wrote, as if expecting absolution from readers of the Daily Telegraph. Just as Princess Diana would regret her Panorama performance, many of her successors will probably come to blush at their profligacy with the "truth". It is to be hoped, for example, that Heseltine finds bliss with her plastic surgeon — and that if she does not, she won't mind being asked what, precisely, went wrong in her relationship corner.

The trouble is that those who invade their own privacy do not just visit the consequences on themselves but, ultimately, on everyone else. Disclosure is on a ratchet, moving in only one direction, gradually reducing the area of life that used to be known as private. With no British privacy law, precedents count, and with a few more precedents like Della, life could become intolerable. As the poet pointed out, the dog returns to his vomit, the sow returns to her mire — once that which was so private as only to be divulged on the deathbed becomes front-page entertainment, what hope is there for reticence?

End them

Matthew Engel



SO THAT'S one old problem solved, then. Well, maybe. That would just leave one other little bit of pre-first world war business for the Government to finish. Far less tragic than Ireland, but one where the force is starting to wear distinctly thin.

Consider the House of Lords. The leader of the Conservative Party wishes to make it clear he is not against reform. Far-reaching changes are obviously needed. But an elected House of Lords would be inconsistent with the predominance of the Commons, and so it would be folly to eradicate the hereditary principle.

William Hague? Almost. But those views expressed in 1991, it is a monument to the historic incompetence of the Labour Party that, 87 years on, hereditary peers, however vestigially, are still able to make laws that affect the rest of us.

Yet the enemies of change continue to plot and plan. I don't really believe in historical determinism except in the sense that fiery young radicals end up in the House of Lords, resisting change shoulder-to-shoulder with the bastards descendants of Charles II.

One of the less noticed

events of this week was that Baron Hattersley of Sparkbrook (formerly called something else) made his maiden speech in the Other Place. At least he had a certain self-awareness that he was undergoing a process as ritualised and inevitable as pattern baldness. He quoted the local MP from his Sheffield childhood whose policy towards the Lords was: "Don't mend them, and end them." Naturally, he became a Viscount.

"I say in my own defence," said Lord Hattersley, "that I am not at all convinced that a chamber of the British Parliament which is based on patronage is much of a democratic improvement on one which is based on heredity." True. And something for Baron Hattersley, who was his present position and 2139-a-day attendance allowance entirely to patronage, to contemplate himself during their Lordships' Pleasure — which is Lords' speak for tea-break.

But if the Labour Party should have learned anything over the past 87 years, it is that the best in this matter is the enemy of the good. Believe that I am, I happen to think that, if an elected second chamber is good enough for every other mature liberal democracy, it ought to be good enough for this one.

DOUBTLESS I will change my mind come the day that I clamber aboard the 2139-a-day gravy train. In the meantime, I take the view that the entire House of Lords constitutes a massive social security racket, of precisely the kind the Government is pledged to eradicate.

Removing the hereditaries is an essential first stage because, until that happens, the opponents of any kind of change, reinforced by fresh

generations of Hattersleys, will keep stalling until the crack of doom.

They are subtler and more insidious than they once were, but the agenda is exactly the same. The most energetic of the opponents is Viscount Cranborne (or, as I swear I once heard him introduced, Crumbum), son and heir of the sixth Marquis of Salisbury and most vigorous defender of what his great-grandfather called "the constitutionally correct assembly in the wild".

It is, perhaps, the historic destiny of the British people to take eventual control over their lives, and the historic destiny of generations of Salsburys to try to stop them.

The House of Lords constitutes a massive social security racket

Crumbum's strategy now is to paint the Government as enemies of democracy, set (as he said in a lecture last Friday) on "a deliberate project: the steady accretion of power to Mr Blair and his party".

Crumbum's thesis was that constitutional reform should be approached by reforming the Commons first, and not worrying about the Lords. He backed this by characterising the Lords as a bulwark against "elective dictatorship" (a phrase coined by a Conservative politician, Lord Hailsham, but mysteriously unused by any Tory between May 1979 and May 1997).

"This is a Prime Minister," Crumbum concluded, "whose piecemeal and headlong dismantling of the present constitution looks increasingly like an attempt to rig the new

system to his own advantage." He cheered on by a ridiculous leader in The Daily Telegraph, which said Labour, by attacking the hereditary principle in the Lords, was also attacking the monarchy and property. (That not merely could have been written in 1911; it probably was.)

WHILE Alastair Campbell lives, Tony Blair hardly needs me to defend him. Not on the day that he backs in the abdication in the world. But this is a malevolent attack, and a wholly unjust one.

The Blair Government has embarked on a policy of creating alternative power centres within the United Kingdom over which it cannot have guaranteed control. There is no certainty that Labour, during mid-term voting, will necessarily win power in Scotland, Wales or London. Northern Ireland, if the plan sticks, will also be able to make decisions about its own affairs which have been taken by ministers for 25 years.

This is in stark contrast to the policies of the Government of which Crumbum, as Leader of the House of Lords, was an unelected member. This dealt with threats to its untrammelled internal power, like the GLC, by abolishing them. (And internal threats, like the EU, by bitching at them.)

Majoritarian rule by the Commons, unchecked by anyone except a second chamber of minimal legitimacy, has been seen to fail. Blair is the first Prime Minister to face this. Like peace in Ireland, it is a noble project. And if it is to succeed, he needs to project the nobles a very long way from their current cushy seats. Starting with the Crumbums. Followed by the Hattersleys.

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The peace deal: Comment

First person

Danny Morrison

LETITIA Fitzpatrick from Ulster Television says to me: "I am so thirsty. Would you?" Okay, I say. Once more I'll get you coffee. It is 11.56pm, Stormont, Government Buildings. At midnight, if the parties to Senator George Mitchell's talks haven't agreed and gone home, they'll all turn into pumpkins.

Just at midnight I arrive back at the press conference hut with the coffee. Behind me the aroma has seemingly attracted several suspicious-looking men in suits, some more in denim jackets and, to my left, women with non-Catholic perus.

Then I hear the booming voice of Ian Paisley and realise that I am at my first DUP press conference and have no flask jacket.

"I have here in my hand," he begins, "a delegate's badge which gives me the right to attend all meetings of the Forum on one side, and the right to attend all meetings of the talks on the other hand."

"Why didn't you use it for two years?" shouts a man to my left.

"The people wanted you in here to fight for them. You wouldn't do it! You hadn't got the balls!" shouts a man to my right.

Oh dear, I think. I'm with the UVF.

"You're not pressmen," declares a most perspicacious Mr Paisley. "You belong to parties that are opposed to my party, so just shut up!"

"Your days of telling people to shut up are gone!" "Yeh! You don't even care about the people. You don't give a shit, with your big fucking house!"

Uh-oh. I'm now in the middle of the UDA.

"You are all fascists! Adams lovers!" This is shouted at me and them, and it is partially true. At any moment I am expecting them to zero in on the common enemy — me, the Armatite and Ballot Box Kid — but the division between them is palpable.

And where now is Paisley to go? His muscle, the people who accuse him of rolling the snowballs for them to throw — back in 1972, back in the DUP/UDA strike of 1977 — are no longer with him but have their own representatives here in the talks. Unionism in change is dynamic. Unionism is interesting.

Earlier in the evening we were told by Tony Blair's coiffure, Alistair Campbell — described by one British newspaper as the Spindog-General — that the midnight deadline is having a powerful effect of focusing the parties on concluding. He is received by journalists from London with just a bit too much sympathy for my liking.

Two hours later and no one from the Government is telling us what is happening, though Sinn Féin's Mitchell McLaughlin has come out to declare bleakly that here is no agreement because unionists are blocking it. Time passes. The press people get bored. A woman runs in: "There's a rumour that Sinn Féin are walking out!"

"Who started that?" "God knows. But it's a good one."

An hour later a journalist from Dublin says: "Heard anything?" "No. What about you?"

"Can't say — just wanted to check if anybody had a better rumour than me."

Some people are reading, others are snoring. I asked Letitia to name her favourite film, book, song and poem, and at the prompt of the latter she launches into T. S. Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*.

A cold coming we had of it, Just the worst time of the year.

For a journey, and such a long journey,

The ways deep and the weather sharp,

The very dead of winter. It was an eerie rendition, given our circumstances.

In a press hut I met Frank Millar, London correspondent of the Irish Times.

Years ago we couldn't speak to each other because he was general secretary of the Ulster Unionist Party and I was national director of publicity for Sinn Féin. But now that we were covering the talks for newspapers we had a cover for talking.

People have to talk — it is the way forward.

Danny Morrison, novelist, former intern and prisoner, coined the phrase "The Armatite and the Ballot Box" for Sinn Féin.



What we saw unfold was Britain's finest attempt to solve the problem

Conor Gearty

AFTER yesterday's breakthrough, it is finally possible to be a rational optimist on the future of Northern Ireland. The politicians have surprised us all — and perhaps most of all themselves — by the scale of their achievements after days spent in exhaustive but honest debate.

Presiding over the British side, Tony Blair and Ms Mowlem deserve to be spoken of in the same breath as Gladstone, for the energy, commitment and tolerant openness in the way they have dealt amiably with the seemingly intractable, and for having enthusiastically prised open the minds of the deeply prejudiced.

Of course, they have built on the work of John Major and co-operated with successive Irish administrations. Others, such as Gerry Adams and John Hume, have naturally had pivotal roles. But what we saw unfold before us yesterday was the finest attempt by a British administration this century to solve not (as it is commonly called) the problem of Irish nationalism, but rather the problem of Ireland's British unionism.

In his hour of triumph, Tony Blair has been chided for being unduly obsessed with David Trimble and his cohorts, but here is a prime

minister who knows his British and Irish history.

No force has had greater destructive impact on UK politics over the past 120 years than Ireland's unique brand of loyalty to the Crown. It ravaged Gladstone's Liberal Party in 1886. A romantic commitment to its absolute indestructibility helped transform Salisbury's all-powerful Conservative Party into a self-styled Unionist rump. Asquith's attempt in 1912-14 to deliver what we would now call Irish devolution provoked a seditious conspiracy across the United Kingdom.

Lloyd George's solution in 1921 may have brought Ireland a temporary victory in Ireland, but it was only at a cost of sacrificing three-quarters of the island and three generations of Northern Irish Catholics. They were transformed into a silently suffering "inferior race" hidden in a nation that had the effort to persist in proclaiming itself the home of civil liberties and the rule of law.

When these people finally said enough, in the late 1960s, the resumed failure of Ireland's Unionist left blood on the hands of a succession of British premiers, mocking in their own backyard their delusions of sovereign power.

This is the vice of history

from which Mr Blair and Ms Mowlem seem triumphantly to have extracted their country. This initiative is more likely to succeed than so many of the failures of the past because it has started from the right premise. The predicament of British policy in Ireland has long been for centre-based solutions, gatherings of the decent trying to solve by reason the turmoil created around them by the "extremists", the "terrorists" and the other irreconcilables supposedly contaminating politics with their criminal lust for violence.

SUCH an approach has inevitably always meant little change and more political violence. It was into this tradition that the Sunningdale failure fell, as did an earlier assembly of the great and the good, the now forgotten Irish Convention with which Lloyd George first tried to solve the Irish problem in 1917-18. He quickly learned his lesson, cut out the middle men and dealt directly with Michael Collins and the IRA to get the treaty that brought Britain a half-century of Irish peace.

Under the patient tutelage of John Hume, who like Parnell appreciates the significance of the violence that he

nevertheless morally abhors, successive British administrations have finally followed Lloyd George's second precedent and brought all the politicians together, even those whose violence has not been sanctioned by the State. This settlement is their second big reward, their first being the paramilitary cease-fires that made it possible. But the price has been the contemplation of a deal that would never have been dreamed of by the centre parties acting alone and would normally be anathema to Unionism.

Despite this, the settlement has every chance of sticking. It is a triumph for the art of creative negativity. The Unionists in Ireland have been perpetually dedicated to the status quo, saying no at every critical moment in their community's history. This process has survived through astute dependence on such negativity, its guiding principles being the "triple lock" and "consent" (a polite word for veto). To Trimble's immense credit he did not balk at the manoeuvring and lapse back into the juvenile of "doing what we know best, saying no".

Conor Gearty is Professor of Human Rights Law, Kings College London

The hand of history



Colin Parry: "Until the bomb, the hand of history hadn't remotely touched us. Those five days (between the explosion and Tim's death) were horrendous. I've not a religious man but I've often wondered whether it was fate or chance."

"I've never forgiven the killers of Tim, but I don't particularly want the police to catch them. I don't know how I'd react if I knew who they were, where they lived, their families. That would make them human and give a focus to my anger."

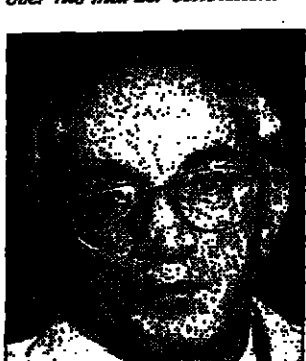
"Now I'm engaged full time trying to raise £1 million to build a peace centre."

Colin Parry's son Tim, aged 12, was killed by an IRA bomb in Warrington in 1993.

grieving in public for a long long time now. It's time to stop.

"We lost our daughter just like thousands and thousands of people lost their loved ones. Personally for me the battle goes on. We're going to start the whole process again when we go back to trial. We'll keep fighting."

Sean Reilly's daughter, Karen, aged 15, was shot dead in 1980 by British soldier Les Clegg while riding in a stolen car in Belfast. Clegg awaits a retrial over his murder conviction.

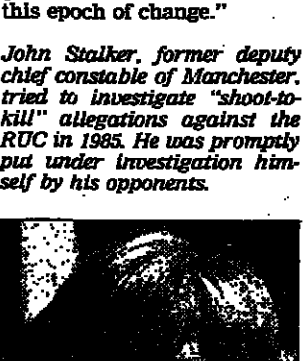


John Stalker: "My involvement killed my mother and it brought my family to its knees. I've always vowed I'd never speak about Northern Ireland since. When I was there, I never thought I would see this day: there was such an accumulation of hatred. While working there, it felt like three steps back to every two steps forward."

"Nevertheless, I have a high regard for the people; they are warm and decent. I just pray this isn't the beginning of a false dawn, but the beginning of new life."

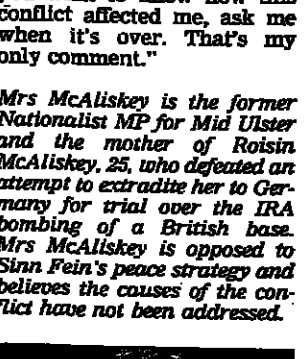
"The new leadership of the RUC is leadership for the next century. Ronnie Flanagan is a good man to lead them into this epoch of change."

John Stalker, former deputy chief constable of Manchester, tried to investigate "shoot-to-kill" allegations against the RUC in 1985. He was promptly put under investigation himself by his opponents.



Bernadette McAliskey: "If you want to know how this conflict affected me, ask me when it's over. That's my only comment."

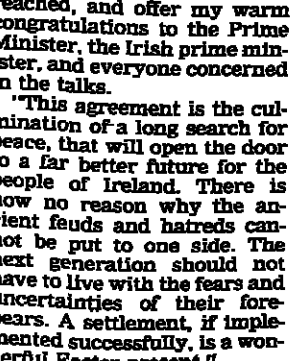
Mrs McAliskey is the former Nationalist MP for Mid Ulster and the mother of Roisin McAliskey, 25, who defected an attempt to extradite her to Germany for trial over the IRA bombing of a British base. Mrs McAliskey is opposed to Sinn Féin's peace strategy and believes the causes of the conflict have not been addressed.



Lord Molyneux of Kilkead: "I'm a little alarmed about the hype — the TV and radio are going over the top. If things don't work out, there's going to be disillusionment."

"Pressure-cooker conclaves are not conducive to sound judgement. Imagine those poor devils sitting there through the night, starved of sleep and being expected to make momentous decisions."

James Molyneux, Unionist Party leader, 1979 to 1995; participated in failed 1993 Anglo-Irish initiative.



John Major: "I am delighted that agreement has been reached, and offer my warm congratulations to the Prime Minister, the Irish prime minister, and everyone concerned in the talks."

"This agreement is the culmination of a long search for peace, that will open the door to a far better future for the people of Ireland. There is now no reason why the ancient feuds and hatreds cannot be put to one side. The next generation should not have to live with the fears and uncertainties of their forebears. A settlement, if implemented successfully, is a wonderful Easter present."

John Major was Conservative prime minister from 1990-97.

Radical approach on prisoners and North-South co-operation used to persuade both sides

Gladstone's heir

Paul Bew

THE modern Ulster question opened with Mr Gladstone's conversion to home rule in 1886. For the first time, the large Protestant and Unionist majority in the north-east of Ireland was confronted by a British premier who believed that they should accept the establishment of an all-Ireland parliament in Dublin.

Labour used to advocate a policy of Irish unity by "consent". But now the present prime minister gives consent as the reason why Irish unity will not happen in his lifetime. Consent, after all, is endorsed by the Irish state. Northern Ireland will not leave the UK unless a majority votes for it.

This is of decisive significance. The Ulster problem only becomes intractable when a British prime minister is burdened with a manifesto commitment which places him at direct odds with the sentiments of a large majority in the province.

H H Asquith, labouring under a commitment to 32-county home rule, not shared by key cabinet members such as Winston Churchill and David Lloyd George, encountered this grim, unpalatable reality in the 1912-14 period when

Ireland seemed to be racing towards bloody civil war. At the last minute, on the eve of the first world war, however, some creative ideas for compromise were close to implementation: Northern Ireland would remain outside the working of a Dublin parliament, and direct Westminster rule would continue. A Westminister rule which, in the aftermath of any home rule settlement, would be significantly influenced by Irish nationalist MPs still at Westminster and possibly even serving in British cabinets. Direct rule, in short, with a green tinge — the guiding principle of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985.

With the triumph of the gun in Irish politics, North and South, in the 1916-23 period, such liberal subtleties had to be put aside; instead, both northern Catholics and Protestants in the Irish Free State (who — like Mr Blair's mother — tended to leave in large numbers) found themselves trapped in highly uncongenial regimes.

Every serious attempt at a settlement since then has been based on two key principles: fair treatment for the northern Catholic minority, combined with a North-South body, to increase co-operation on an "all-Ireland" basis.

The tough Unionist prime

minister, Sir James Craig — and Mr Trimble is something of an expert on this period of history — signed a pact with Michael Collins to this effect in 1922; ironically it failed, as much as anything due to Dublin's unwillingness to work it.

In 1974 another tough Unionist premier, Brian Faulkner, attempted a similar deal at Sunningdale — internal power-sharing plus an Irish dimension —

but he could not in the end sell it to his own supporters. Privately Faulkner believed with much justice that the Irish dimension/Council of Ireland idea he had accepted was "necessary nonsense" in order to win mainstream nationalist acceptance of partition.

Today David Trimble faces the same difficulty; he is sure, again with good reason, that the cross-border arrangements flowing from his most recent negotiations with Mr Blair and Mr Ahern are not transitional to Irish unity — despite Republican hype and

Paisleyite rage — but, none the less, can they be sold to his highly nervous Unionist core constituency?

In 1985, despairing of any local Unionist support for a power-sharing deal, the British government went for a new approach: the Irish government was given a direct role — largely but not purely consultative — in the affairs of Northern Ireland.

At the time Britain believed that it had secured an unambiguous Dublin acceptance of the legitimacy of partition; but London bitterly began to realise that it had been short-changed. Nevertheless, the Anglo-Irish Agreement increased the support for the consent principle in southern Irish politics and helped to open up the process to the point where the Irish government this time is genuinely promising the type of radical surgery to the constitution which will remove any vestige of a claim to territory or jurisdiction in the North.

But Unionists have never accepted the Anglo-Irish Agreement which was imposed without their support in a classically high-handed Thatcherite manner. Under Major and Blair a huge British effort has been needed to draw them back into the process. It is a key point of the current negotiations that the

Anglo-Irish Agreement will be replaced by a different model of co-operation.

The top line of the current proposed Agreement is the acceptance by Irish nationalists via a referendum of the democratic legitimacy of partition — a retrospective condemnation by the Irish people of the IRA's 25-year-long campaign of coercive violence.

In exchange Unionists have to concede power-sharing, North-South co-operation, and a very sensitive issue, a radical approach on the prisoner issue. It is this projected radicalism which gives some hope that Sinn Féin might accept a deal which is otherwise not particularly attractive.

This deal may yet fail, but certain principles — consent, equality, an Irish dimension — are now an integral part of inter-governmental theology, and will continue to underpin any future attempted settlement.

In this case there really is no alternative. If it does succeed, even Mr Gladstone will have played his part — his concept of home rule (now home rule all round in Scotland and Wales as well) is central to any new dispensation.

Paul Bew is professor of Irish politics at Queens University, Belfast



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Wall Street phoenix gets ready for the big burn-up

Reputations

MARK TRAN chronicles the rise and fall – and rise again – of Sanford Weill, head of Travelers, as he prepares for the Citicorp merger

SANFORD Weill has long harboured ambitions to assemble a "great financial services company without parallel" and many thought his empire-building reached its apogee last September, when Weill's Travelers Insurance group announced plans to buy Salomon, Wall Street's leading bond trading house.

When one reporter was bold enough to suggest to Weill that he had reached the peak of his career with the Salomon deal, Weill snapped: "How do you know?"

Salomon, as we now know, was just the appetiser for the main course.

With the completion of the \$166 billion (£99 billion) merger agreement with Citicorp, Weill, aged 64, has sealed his reputation as the pre-eminent deal-maker of his generation. Last year, Weill was the highest paid chief executive in the United States, receiving \$230.5 million, including a \$22.2 million gain from exercising stock options. While he may not have achieved the international reputation of high-rollers such as Henry Kravis of KKR or investor Carl Icahn, Weill is a familiar and respected figure on Wall Street.

He is considered to be a financial alchemist who transforms distressed companies into profitable operations.

Salomon was a variation on that theme. The investment bank was irreverently portrayed in the 1988 book *Liar's Poker* – a description by former Salomon's trader Michael Lewis of the bond-dealing "games" practised at the bank – and it has never

really recovered its élan since 1991, when a treasury-bond scandal almost destroyed it.

Citicorp marks a break from Weill's usual modus operandi. After its brush with disaster in the 1990s, when it hemorrhaged money from bad loans in Latin America, Citicorp is flourishing under chairman John Reed.

By teaming up with Citicorp, parent company of Citibank – "the citi that never sleeps" – Weill has resurrected the concept of a super-market serving clients from cradle to grave.

Others have tried one-stop financial shopping and failed.

Dean Witter Discover was part of the retail group Sears Roebuck for most of the decade, but shoppers did not fancy buying shares as well as chairs from the same company.

At their press conference at New York's Waldorf Astoria, Weill and Reed, who walked on arms around each other – insisted that the time was now right for one-stop financial services.

The rise of a global middle-class which wants convenience in its financial services, justified the creation of Citigroup, the executives said. Citigroup will bundle together under one roof credit cards, insurance, brokering, mutual funds and banking.

An analogy would be buying a stereo system. Instead of having to decide on a separate amplifier, tuner, cassette

deck, compact-disc player and speakers, why not just buy an integrated unit? As any audiophile will argue, you probably get a better system by choosing separate parts.

To live up to its billing, Citigroup will have to persuade customers to accept its myriad in-house offerings. Citibank will therefore urge its customers to buy shares through Salomon Smith Barney, and to buy car and home insurance through Travelers – the cross-selling Weill and Reed are so enthusiastically touting. It will be tough with so many discount brokerages available and with trading on the Internet. But there is the convenience factor: one consolidated statement each month with all your financial information.

At the age of 27, Weill opened his own firm with some friends who used every penny they had to buy a seat on the New York Stock Exchange. The brokerage firm was run "on the basis of whoever did the most business last month was going to be the guy who runs the company next month," said Weill. Colleagues at the time described business as a "zoo".

He slashed costs and built up the unglamorous yet lucrative core business of making unsecured loans to households with incomes of between \$20,000 and \$45,000. Commercial Credit's profits multiplied by almost eight times in six years.

In 1988, Weill bought Primmerica, the parent of Smith Barney, which was awash in red ink after the 1987 crash. In 1992, he began to buy Travelers, which was plagued by bad property investments. In 1993, he bought back from

his son. He closed down a fledgling steel business while Weill was at Cornell University and soon afterwards abandoned Weill's mother for a younger woman.

Weill rushed home to patch up his parents' marriage, missing a crucial examination and the chance to get his degree. The family crisis threatened Weill's engagement to Joan Mosher. "My in-laws wanted to cancel the wedding," he said in a 1993 New York Times interview, because "my parents were getting divorced and I already was a failure".

Weill eventually got his degree and his bride – to whom he has now been married for 43 years.

The young Weill was rejected by several Wall Street firms, despite his Ivy League credentials, an experience that made his subsequent conquests all the sweeter. He eventually found a job as a clerk at Bear Stearns, then a small brokerage company, for \$150 a month – a pittance, even in the mid-fifties. He hustled quotes for the infamous senior partner, the late Salim Lewis, whose habit it was to scream at him through a barred window.

office, where buy and sell orders are matched and customer records compiled by computer. He considers it the heartland of a brokerage, the place where costs can make or break the business. When the bear market of 1973-74 gripped Wall Street, many companies were unable to make money on the reduced number of trades. Weill's firm gobbled them up one by one, smoothly integrating them into his back-office system.

From 1969 to 1979, the firm grew from its single New York office to 280 branches worldwide. As the stock market recovered, Weill's firm – Shearson Loeb Rhodes – became one of Wall Street's most profitable retail-security houses.

In 1981, he sold it to American Express for \$300 million, worried that he lacked the muscle to compete with firms such as Bache and Dean Witter who allied themselves with larger companies such as Prudential and Sears Roebuck. It was the biggest blunder of his career.

Weill failed to blend in with the smooth operators at American Express, and he resigned in 1985. It was the first time he was out of a job for 30 years.

The comeback began in 1986, when he took control of Commercial Credit, the sickly finance subsidiary of Control Data, an information-processing company.

He slashed costs and built up the unglamorous yet lucrative core business of making unsecured loans to households with incomes of between \$20,000 and \$45,000. Commercial Credit's profits multiplied by almost eight times in six years.

In 1988, Weill bought Primmerica, the parent of Smith Barney, which was awash in red ink after the 1987 crash. In 1992, he began to buy Travelers, which was plagued by bad property investments. In 1993, he bought back from



Dealer's odds... Even with Weill's talent the 'financial supermarket' is a risky game

American Express his old company, Shearson, for \$1.2 billion.

Last September it was Citicorp. There has been much speculation about the ability of Weill and Reed, two strong-willed men, to work in harmony. But such a vast empire will probably take at least two men. The more pressing challenge is to prevent such a massive entity from becoming a "bureaucratic mastodon", in the words of Ron Chernow, author of the House of Morgan.

Weill is not an organisation man by nature. He hates meetings, is famous for not writing memos and renowned for his temper.

A key challenge is to create an integrated but not over-bureaucratic structure that will reconcile the two different cultures: Travelers, with its deal-making ethos, and Citicorp, which grew internally. Cross-selling – which looks fine on paper – will take some work to make a success. The idea is not to bombard clients with everything that Citicorp has to offer, says Nick Winter, vice-president of the Mercer consultancy group, but instead to be selective in offering services. That means mining the databases of the whole group and using the information gleaned to target customers for certain products.

If Citigroup knows that a

family is about to have child, for example, the bank can send the family a tuition savings plan for its future education. If that smacks of Big Brother, that is the kind of information a financial supermarket will have at its disposal. But it may be simpler – and cheaper – for Citicorp to blanket-mail customers with product information, as is the case now at Citibank or American Express. In which case, of course, most of the literature will end up in the bin.

But Mr Winter believes the merger has "huge" potential. "If Travelers and Citicorp don't do it, others will. They have an advantage in being the first."

Daimler-Benz finds a new sense of drive

With a new chairman at the wheel, the German group has bounced back from losses of £2bn, writes DAVID GOW



Back on track... The A-Class Mercedes passes the 'moose test' and (below) the new man in the company driving seat, Jürgen Schrempf

Euro Eye

shareholder-value, transparency, cost-reductions and client-satisfaction – buzz-words of the 1980s and early 1990s have been put on an informal but all-pervasive index.

High-technology concern, synergy, diversification strategy – all those values that were associated with Edzard Reuter, Schrempf's predecessor, have been unceremoniously dumped, along with Reuter himself.

Reuter, once the "cult-figure of modern capitalism" is now simply the man who made Daimler and German manufacturing "too fat, too heavy, too dear".

"He [Schrempf] has brought a new dynamism and focus to the group," insiders say.

"We're now about transport in all its modes. Forget all that stuff about cross-fertilisation, from white-goods to defence,

from cars to office-equipment."

"Each division has now got its own targets and has been left to get on with meeting them within the overall strategy set by the group board."

Earlier this week, in the glass-and-steel opulence of Stuttgart's Liederhalle congress centre, on a stage set recalling the modernising ambition of Mandelstam's New Labour conference.

Schrempf and his board colleagues set out the strategy they have adopted intended to make Daimler "one of the world's top-earners".

This mood of buoyant optimism and openness contrasted vividly with the

surly defensiveness that characterised the end of the Reuter era.

It was not just the DM4.3 billion (£1.4 billion) operating profits of last year, the 23 per cent growth in output in quarter one of this year or the fact that Daimler shares have outperformed

earnings was set fair and would not be deflected by the vicissitudes of the foreign exchange markets, unforeseen like the Asian financial crisis or even new "moose-tests" that flipped over first the new small car, the A-Class, and then the Smart urban car. Schrempf has been em-

boldened to break German corporate ground by publishing for the first time specific growth targets for each of Daimler's five main divisions: cars, commercial vehicles, aerospace, financial services and "directly managed

the market 20 per cent this year so far. Nor the upturn in job-recruitment that has *inter alia* raised the number of trainees to more than 10,000.

It was the sense that the course for growth in turnover and, above all, in

businesses" like the railway systems supplier Adtranz.

He has already set each of them the goal of achieving a rate of return (on capital employed) of 12 per cent.

These growth targets are relatively conservative for the period up to 2000, with the overall group turnover projected to rise from DM124 billion last year to DM160 billion by then.

But Schrempf fairly took the breath of most observers away by holding out the prospect of doubling global sales to DM250 billion within 10 years from now.

So where's the growth coming from?

Jürgen Hubbert, head of

Mercedes cars, thinks that the greatest potential for growth lies in other parts of the business.

Commercial vehicles remain a sticky wicket, even with a projected expansion to 500,000 sales by 2000, though expansion in financial/media services seems assured.

Could it be that aerospace will prove to be the engine for further growth? Daimler's aerospace unit, Dasa, certainly seems to have turned the corner after the disastrous losses incurred with Fokker.

Last year it went into the black, with operating profits of DM430 million, and output, largely on the back of booming Airbus orders, is projected to rise to DM18 billion last year.

But the new openness does not extend to aerospace.

Manfred Bischoff, Dasa's

boss, has taken a Trappist vow of silence after the French government and state-owned Aérospatiale convinced themselves that he – and Dick Evans of British Aerospace – were plotting a pincer-move to seize control first of the Airbus consortium and then of the proposed European Aerospace and Defence Company.

Not true, said Schrempf. It was the one moment that he sounded unconvincing.

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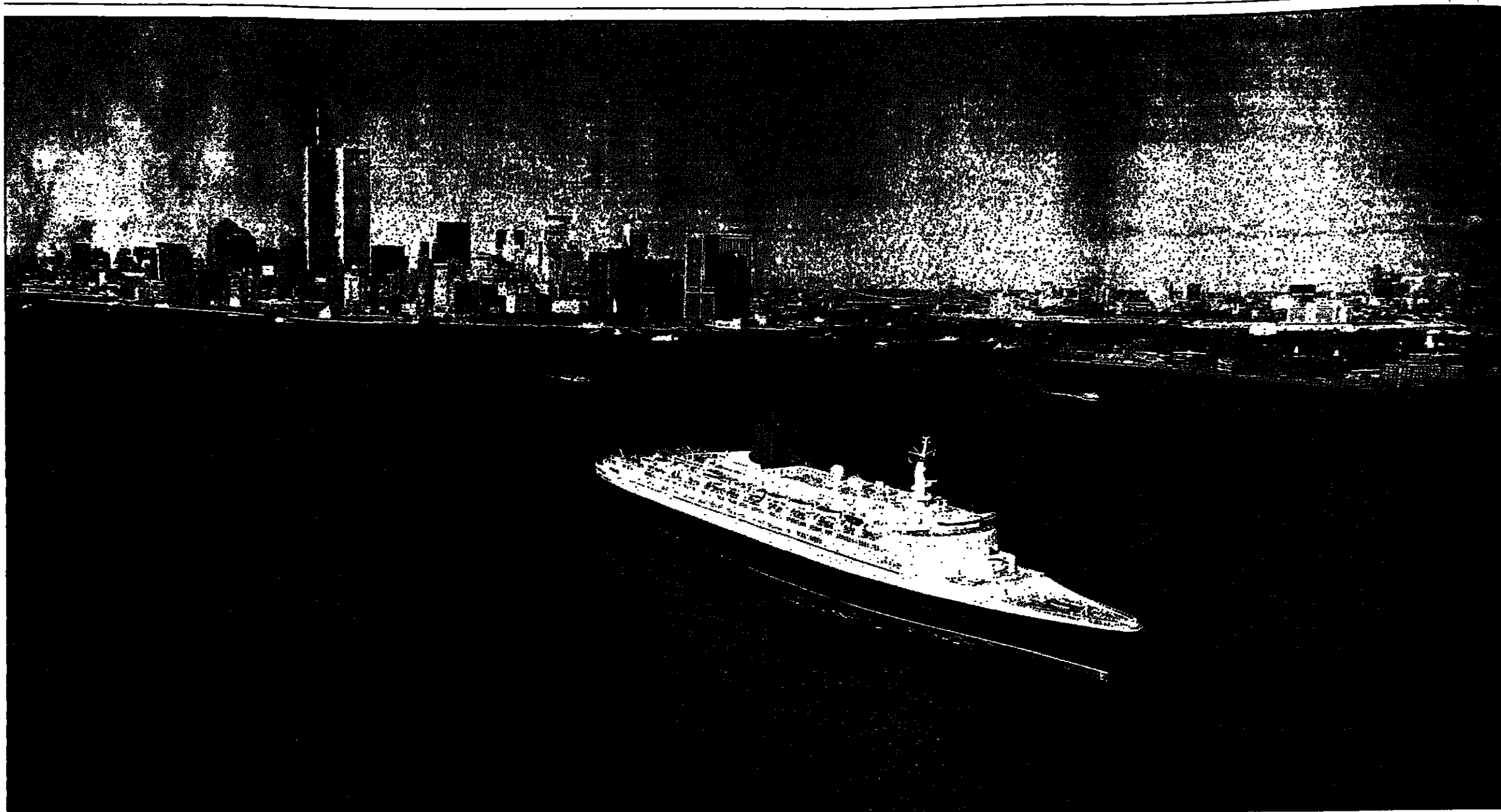
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Finance **Guardian**

Ocean Queen... Cunard's QE2 sets sail from New York. Now cruise ships catering for a diversity of tastes from gays to gamblers are being built for a market growing by 10 per cent in the US and 20 per cent in Europe PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMMETT

Titanic launches cruise craze

THERE'S a race on to re-create the Titanic. As images of Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio fade from cinema screens around the world, two companies have leapt into a contest to be first to build a replica of the ill-fated White Star liner.

The British owner of the Titanic may have tried to silence film-makers who attempted to cash in on the disaster in 1912 in which 1,500 of the 2,200 passengers were lost. But there is no such cynicism today. The Hollywood blockbuster has clearly sparked a wave of Titanic-mania which executives in the cruise business reckon will do them no harm at all.

Cruise ship operators simply cannot wait to capitalise on even the briefest celluloid appearance. Even the execrably bad fly-on-the-wall television series about Carnival Cruise's newest ship does not seem to have dented the company's business.

But in a world where the blue-ribose set is being replaced by the gay set, the gambling set, the boozing set and (God forbid) the Disney set, it is clear that anything goes. Spookily, in an industry where safety must still rank as a pre-eminent concern, there seems to be no superstitious unease about re-creating a liner whose name has become synonymous with disaster and tragedy.

A South African company, RMS Titanic — working in a consortium with which advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi is also involved — plans to spend about £270 million on building a new liner which it wants to set sail at 23.00 on December 31, 1999 for a millennium cruise to New York. Harland & Wolff, the Belfast-based shipyard which built the ill-starred original, is acting as a consultant.

But a rival proposal has just been launched by a Swiss-American consortium which has a budget of \$200 million but does not plan to see its Titanic go down the slipway until April 10, 2002 — 90 years to the day after the original voyage.

These are symptoms of a much bigger boom. The whole cruise business is expanding at a ferocious rate, and 22 brand new vessels, valued at \$6.3 billion, will set sail before the turn of the century.

However, there are still little ships to be found. The Hebridean Princess — which carries just 49 passengers in a sumptuously old-fashioned ambience, including open fires — was sold this week for \$4 million and bookings for the summer are already run-

One of the century's biggest disasters is providing a bonanza for film-makers and shipbuilders, says LISA BUCKINGHAM



High life with Carnival, promoters of mass market cruises

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDY NEWMAN

ning at 95 per cent of budget. But she is looking distinctly like a case apart nowadays.

Most of the tonnage plying the world's bluest oceans are simply huge vessels; floating cities rather than ships, which weigh in at more than 100,000 gross tons and tower like skyscrapers above the waterline. Although most of them still carry only a few more passengers than did the Titanic, some of these pleasure domes are notching up passenger lists 3,300 strong.

And if some of the more ambitious plans of event-garde designers are realised we will see 250,000-ton behemoths setting sail with 8,600 people aboard. Even more futuristic is the notion of a "World

City", which resembles a Starship Enterprise-type mother ship with accommodation and service units connected like satellites.

For those whose awareness of cruise shipping is confined to names such as Cunard — which, along with its Queen Elizabeth 2 flagship, was sold earlier this week to Miami's Carnival Corporation — and who regard a cruise holiday as something only those within sight of the grave undertake, all this requires something of a double-take.

The cruise holiday market is growing at about 10 per cent in the US even though it is already considered a mature market. In Britain and Europe that growth rate is

more than 20 per cent. Bryony Coulson, assistant director of the Passenger Shipping Association, explains: "The advent of four operators has made a difference. Companies such as Airtours (which is 30 per cent owned by Carnival), Thomson, Saga and First Choice all now own or charter ships."

"They have nurtured their existing client base to encourage people to cruise. And by providing cruise-and-stay packages they have held people's hands and said, 'It's OK'. This has helped to dispel the myth of the blue-ribose brigade and the average age of cruise passengers has dropped sharply."

Much of this reflects the in-

fluence of the world's biggest cruise company, Carnival, which has been massively successful in stimulating demand by introducing the notion of three-star cruises for the masses, frequently bearing an uncomfortable likeness to a floating Las Vegas.

These cruises are frequently entirely self-contained, calling at few ports. Indeed, when the first Caribbean cruise for gay men was organised earlier this year the passengers were barred from several islands.

Headed by Micky Arison, whose father established the business, Carnival is the world's largest and arguably by far the most financially powerful cruise company. But although its roots are in down-market cruises it now has upmarket brands such as Holland America Line as well as Windstar and the super-exclusive Seabourn line, with which it intends to merge.

But despite the marketing might of Carnival, coupled with that of rivals Royal Caribbean and P&O — which faces some stock market pressure to float off its Princess Cruises business — it is still estimated that only one in five Americans considered likely to buy a cruise actually does so. The total market is put at something between 35 and 50 million people. In Britain, the potential market is much smaller but it is still reckoned that only 1 per cent of people of those who have the money actually take a cruise.

Ms Coulson argues that the huge variety of cruises which are now offered by four operators, together with the downward pressure exerted on prices by big holiday retailers, have also helped to light the cruising world's blue touch paper.

And although older cruise ships can be modified — one of Norwegian Caribbean Line's fleet was recently cut in half and stretched — the financial demands of the major operators mean they usually choose to build more efficient new ships, even though the careful treatment given to cruise vessels as opposed to their counterparts in the cargo shipping arena means they can happily last for decades after decade.

There are also issues of style which can hamper the movement of cruise ships, even though one of their strong points is that owners can set itineraries which can be adapted to reflect leisure fashions.

Cruise ships tend to be built in European shipyards rather than those of the Far East which would be much

cheaper because the vessels are fitted out to much higher standards. But there are immense differences between those destined for the American market and those which are aimed at European passengers.

The US boats tend to be brash and garish, with big open spaces where passengers can congregate. European-targeted liners, on the other hand, tend to have more nooks and crannies, even though they are very bit as large as the US ships because passengers are thought to like a little privacy. They also usually feature a promenade deck and smoking is also generally allowed in the restaurants, reflecting the penchant for ciggies among southern Europeans. The Americans, on the other hand, are planning no-smoking cruises.

Holiday habits — coupled with the recent Asian economic crisis — lie behind the very slow spread of cruising to the Far East. Carnival did

Buoyant demand

Passengers (millions)	1990	1995	1999*
North America	3.93	4.83	6.80
Rest of World	0.56	1.92	2.15
Total	4.49	6.75	8.95
Berths (thousands)			
North America	83.5	106.1	145.4
Rest of World	29.8	41.5	61.5
Total	113.1	147.6	206.9
Capacity utilisation (%)	80	92	87

Source: NatWest Markets

* Forecast

have a joint venture with Korea's Hyundai but that has now been abandoned. A Singaporean venture was founded towards the end of last year.

But traditionally the Asians do not cruise. As the market is dominated by western groups there have been problems with the food which is often not to the taste of Far Eastern travellers and there have been language difficul-

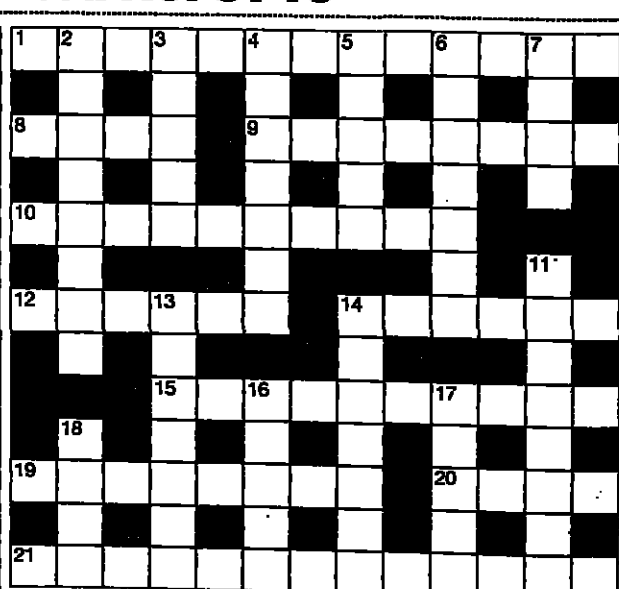
ties. The predilection for travelling in large groups also militates against cruises.

Despite the obstacles to expansion in the Far East, it is clear that globalisation is the trend in cruise shipping and more takeovers and mergers are expected this year. But, as with the ever increasing size of the ships themselves, corporate scale does not necessarily protect against a Titanic-style disaster.

Quick Crossword No. 8719

ACUPUNCTURE
NUMERATOR
F T I C U F
OWNER OTHELLO
R E A N Y R
ALWAYS OTTAWA
P S Y R R P
EXPLODE OUTDO
N A T A O U
NIP DECEPTION
Y E E U E N D
TRANSPARENT

Solution No. 8718



Across

- 1 It reduces vibration (5,8)
- 3 Region (4)
- 9 System of belief and worship (8)
- 10 Fenny snake (5,5)
- 12 Relic (of prehistoric life) (6)
- 14 Wicker container (6)
- 15 It's formed by perpendiculars (5,5)
- 19 Magnificence (8)
- 20 Smell strongly (4)
- 21 Caddish (13)

Down

- 2 Mahogany, oak, etc (8)
- 3 Deep gulf (5)
- 4 Flying post? (7)
- 5 Three-dimensional (5)
- 6 Looks — good wishes (7)
- 7 Cupid (4)
- 11 Helter-skelter (8)
- 13,14 "Believe it or not" (7,3,4)
- 16 Welcome (5)
- 17 Roman (anag) — girl's name (5)
- 18 Metal (4)

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صباحنا من الامم

Spike Milligan on love and loss 15 • Celebrity siblings 17 • The lure of Mars 18

The Guardian the week

Saturday April 11 1998



Chere Hickok (right) is lesbian. She lives in Dallas, Texas, and sends her daughter Reed to the largest gay Sunday school in the world. With its class of 126 children, it is putting gay parenting on the map. **Edward Helmore** reports

God's gays take their kids to Jesus

THIS being Maundy Thursday, Rev Mike Piazza is washing the feet of his flock at evening prayer, just as Jesus did for his disciples at the Last Supper. This being Dallas, in what Piazza refers to as the "Buckle of the Bible Belt", there is a reasonable turn-out but it is, in fact, little more than a warm-up for Sunday when 4,000 are expected to attend this, the Cathedral of Hope.

To the casual observer, there is little in this typically modern church that might suggest it is anything out of the ordinary. Judging by the video projections of the service either side of the altar, it is perhaps more modern in its delivery, and perhaps Rev Piazza's address does not match the fire 'n' brimstone ferocity of his Southern Baptist or Pentecostal brothers that dominate religious observances here.

Closer scrutiny of Rev Piazza's camp style, however, or the sight of the male worshippers with their arms around one another, might

suggest something of what makes this church so different. This is not just the fastest growing church in the Bible Belt but the largest lesbian and gay church in the world.

It was not always this way. A decade ago, when the Cathedral of Hope was first established, funerals far surpassed baptisms as the Aids epidemic swept through Dallas's homosexual community. But now the congregation has grown to more than 2,200 and, thanks to a so-called "Gayby-Bloom", there are 126 children enrolled at Sunday school, most of whom have more than one mother or father, but rarely one of each.

Although the Cathedral of Hope is not the only church built on the acceptance of homosexuality, it may be the first to have made the promotion of gay parenting a key part of its mission. With an unshakeable belief that Jesus, if he was on earth in the flesh today, would not find a better flock to lead, the church intends to overturn the stereotypes that lesbian and gay parents do not exist, or that children suffer irreparable

harm if brought up in such households. It aims to make gay parenting mainstream in a way Middle America can understand and accept.

It is an idea that speaks to our times. Most of the children who attend the Cathedral of Hope Sunday school were born to married parents, one or both of whom later revoked their heterosexual orientation. What is new, however, is a marked shift toward lesbians and gay men choosing to become parents through adoption, surrogacy or artificial insemination.

In the South, where religious intolerance of homosexuality holds strong sway over the hearts and minds of the populace, it is not entirely surprising that Dallas has become the prominent focus for the open melding of homosexuality and religion. New York and San Francisco may have larger gay populations but lack the strong tradition of church-going.

"It's not exactly the kind of thing you expect to find in Dallas," concedes Rev Piazza, a charismatic pastor who is himself the page 14

On song for Jesus... Positive Voices, a choir of HIV-positive singers performing at a world Aids Day service at the Cathedral of Hope. Right: Chere Hickok with her daughter, Reed, the only lesbian-raised pupil in her day school but just an ordinary girl when she goes to Sunday School

PHOTOGRAPHS: ERIC GAY; KETH BARNUM



SMALL ONE



SMOKING CAUSES HEART DISEASE

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The tortured genius Spike Milligan is 80 this week, and as original and iconoclastic as ever

Dark side of the Goon

INTERVIEW BY
SABINE DURRANT



SPIKE MILLIGAN lives on a ridge in East Sussex and from his sitting-room window you can see the weather changing, stripes of sun and cloud, across the fields that unravel down to the sea. There are sheep grazing just beyond his garden: the town of Winchelsea perched on a hill away off to the right. From time to time, you hear a cow lowing somewhere in the distance; otherwise it's a quiet, peaceful spot.

But at night Milligan hears traffic. "Hastings has 100,000 cars so they keep me awake," he told me. "I knock myself out by drinking a bottle of wine. Then I take a handful of sleeping tablets. And I have a big loudspeaker and I turn it up, up to white noise. Hummm, hummm." His mouth distorted into a funnel as he did his imitation of the sound. He seemed to quite enjoy it. "Hummm, hummm," he said again, before adding, "That does the trick."

Milligan is 80 on Thursday and he has his demons, even if they mainly visit at night. People warn you that he has his good days and his bad days — in the past he has refused to see journalists if they were late or been wildly abusive if he felt people were rude. (He could also be acerbic if he felt they were polite too — famously calling Prince Charles, who is patron of the Goon Society and who has invited Milligan to Highgrove, a "groveling little bastard.") He once attacked Peter Sellers with a potato peeler.

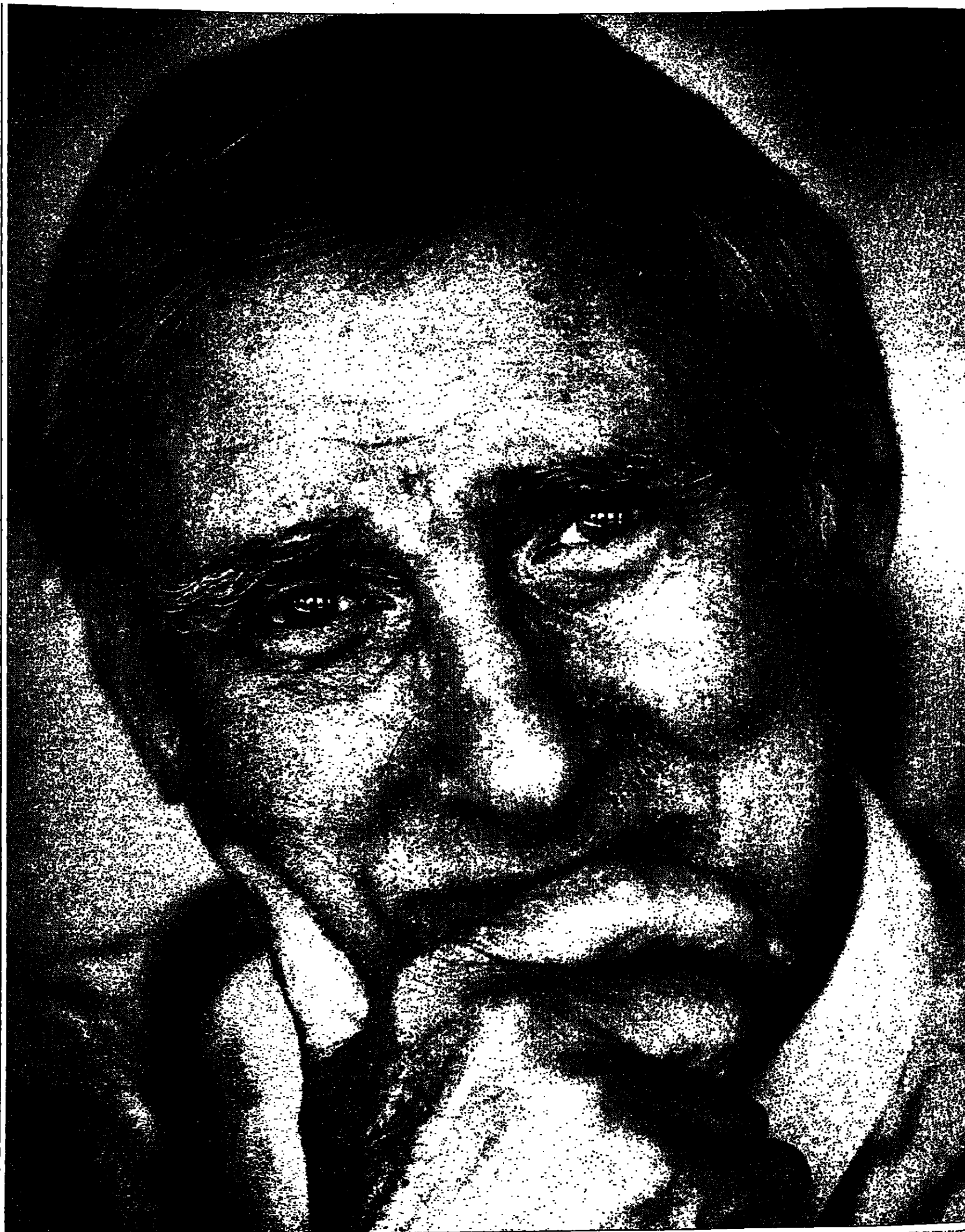
More recently he took a shot with an air rifle at a teenage intruder in his garden. He is a hero of British comedy for the madcap Goons, for the innovative television show *Q*, for his hilarious wartime memoirs, but he is just as famous as a manic depressive (he has had 10 nervous breakdowns), a misanthrope, a loose cannon who couldn't be trusted on live television. (There was a brief period, post-Charles insult, when he was wheeled out on such programmes as *Have I Got News For You*: roll up roll up — Spike the Shocker, the fairground sideshow). Someone a while ago asked him how he thought the public viewed him. "Eccentric, funny, ill," he replied. Or as he once said on *The Goon Show*: "Listen, someone's screaming in agony — fortunately I speak it fluently."

But this wasn't the man I met this week. The man I met was frail, he walked, head bent, at a slumped shuffle, and he was looking upward to his cup of tea. "This is a real treat for me," he said, at the plate of mixed biscuits brought in to the large, light sitting room by his wife, Shelagh.

His eyes are still Ming blue, and he was stylishly dressed in a soft navy jumper and chino trousers ("Shelagh buys my clothes; I don't go out much I suppose..."), but the skin on his face is powdery and his hair looks as if it might blow away. His mouth doesn't always seem to obey the directions from his brain and sometimes, across the Polo mint that darts around his tongue, it is not altogether easy to understand what he says.

Since his triple heart bypass four years ago, he now takes "a regiment" of pills — "six a day: two at breakfast, two at lunch, two at supper" he counted, eyes closed to aid memory — but he is no longer on the lithium which for many years controlled his manic depression. "Apparently I came off it. I don't know when. It did the trick for me." When we met, he'd been in bed for three days with a bad back: "I was on the exercise bike, you know I did it too much — I only did about three miles, but you can stiffen the pedal — and I got this terrible pain. What's it called? The sciatic nerve? I had a healer here last night and it seems to have gone away a bit. But I'm unshaven. I'm awful. I wish I'd shaved for you."

He doesn't like having his photograph taken now (and wouldn't for



Milligan missive... I wrote to Blair. I said "Have a moratorium on births". He didn't write back

this interview, in the pictures available, like the one here, he looks much less fragile than he is). "I looked at my face in the mirror this morning," he said, "and I thought it's falling off, isn't it? Sometimes I look at my face and I say to my wife, 'Who am I?' After a pause, in which, with some difficulty, he got his tongue around a Shrewsbury biscuit, he said again, "I wish I'd shaved for you."

For a man whose life has been as tumultuous as Milligan's (three marriages, six children, two of them illegitimate), he appears, at 80, to have achieved some sort of peace. He can still muster the energy to spit about "the bastards at the BBC" who won't repeat his shows and have "demoted" an

evening of programmes to celebrate his birthday to "bloody BBC2. Aren't I good enough for BBC1?" He can rant about overpopulation: "I wrote to Tony Blair. I said, 'Have a moratorium on births. Don't pay them to have children. Pay them not to have children.' He didn't write back. A prophet in his time is very rarely listened to." He can still engage, too, in the conversational oneness, taking your words literally, that characterises a typical Milligan joke. "When did he last appear live?" "I appear live every day." Does he feel 80? "I think I'm 80, but I'm not speeding." "People say, 'You're Spike Milligan.' I say, 'I know I am, now you go and find out who you are.'" But he also

mentions calm a lot. His marriage to Shelagh, who is 28 years his junior and whom he met in 1974, is "calm". They have a cat, Tiger, who sleeps on Shelagh's bed: "There is something calming about a cat. Just the way they come into a room." The view from his window, he finds "calming". "I could stare at it all day," he said after one of several silences. "I drifted away on it then."

"But sometimes I have a row with Shelagh and that upsets me. I had an affair with a girl in Italy before the war and I said for this television thing — silly man — that the love of my life was Toni Pontani and Shelagh heard this being said but I said to her that I was 50 years ago and she was the

love of my life. But she didn't like that." Milligan spends most of his time writing these days — redoing the popular classics with Milligan irreverence — *Black Beauty*, *Frankenstein* and now *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, who in Milligan's version is gay and called Eric. (Milligan shares an office in London with Eric Sykes. What does he think about having a homosexual dog named after him? "I don't know. He's blind. He can't read," replied Milligan, sombre.) When not writing, he used to renovate furniture ("I was very good with gold leaf") and paint. But when we go to the cupboard under the stairs to find his work — "OH MY GOD!" he shouts — all we see

is a pile of garden furniture. He watches television "addictive" — mainly documentaries about animals. He is a vegetarian. He likes Indian food and wine. His favourite kind costs £103 a bottle, and though he lost much of his money in the "Ash Wednesday" crash, he can still afford it for a treat.

So he has his pleasures in this life. But much of his time, you suspect, is spent thinking about the past. He appears at his happiest spinning anecdotes — growing up in India, his days in a dance band in Bexhill, scoring a try for the army at Twickenham, his life as a gunner in the war — this last the source both of his funniest material (from Hitler: My Part In His

Downfall onwards) and of his depression. (He was "blown up" in Italy — "it had been world war one I would have been court-martialled, but in the second world war they realised it was called battle fatigue.")

His voice is quavery but when he pretends to be somebody else it can be clear and almost strident. He was on sentry duty the day he met Churchill. "HALT! WHO GOES THERE? FRIEND OR FOE? FRIEND? ADVANCE FRIEND AND BE RECOGNISED." And there was Churchill, so I said, "Could I see your identity sir?" "Yes you can. There it is." Then he said to me, "What do you do?" I said, "I do my best." He laughed shakily.

He can spin a jolly tale, too, about his once tortured personal life. His first wife, June, with whom he had three children (one of whom, his only son, Sean, suffers from manic depression), and who left him in the fifties, is not mentioned in his entry in *Who's Who*. But the years appear to have weakened his bitterness. "I was mad. She was lovely but I was out of my mind. Nervous breakdowns... Life was hell with me. She met a bloke, not much of a bloke, bit of rough really, and in those days to commit adultery was a heinous crime. I found them in bed. I had a detective with me and the judge awarded me custody of the children. That hurt me because it was taking their mother away. But the children's childhood were the most wonderful years of my life."

Wasn't it tough bringing up the children on his own? Milligan was off on a reverie. "Wonderful bath-

'I met Churchill on sentry duty. He said to me: "What do you do?" I said: "I do my best"'

times. Bedtimes. Pyjamas. Dolls. Ice creams." He mused for a bit longer. "Lollipops."

Bruised knees, I added. He looked baffled. "What? Bruised knees? "What?" Bruised knees? "WHAT?" I gave up. Did their mother come and visit? "No, she didn't. The reason was she said that I wouldn't give her enough money for the petrol, but I didn't know that." Has he seen her since? "No, her husband wouldn't allow it."

And was his second wife, with whom he had a fourth child and who died of breast cancer in 1978, a good stepmother? There's a long silence. "She was terrible. The rows, the rows, the rows."

In recent years, two further children, a boy and a girl, have come to light. Now grown up, they have both sought out their father. Milligan smiled lightly when I asked about them. "All my children love me very much. It's wonderful. It's wonderful. The girls are like sweethearts. My three sweethearts. (In fact, if you include the illegitimate daughter, there are four.) For a moment he pondered whether he regretted "his womanising", but then he was off on another reminiscence, the time when he was in the loo and Sean, his son, who was little then, came and knocked on the door. "And I said, 'Who's there?' And this voice said, 'It's somebody else.'" Milligan swayed with laughter. He's got your sense of humour then, I said. "Kids' sense of humour," he replied through his heaves.

Not long after this he seemed to tire very suddenly. The pauses grew longer. A deafness seemed to creep over him. He began to seem very much his age. I had asked about his breakdowns. "They were terrible," he said. "If you've been through a breakdown it's like having been hit by a very fine Toledo blade." At the time I didn't quite catch what he said. Did you say "honed"? I asked? There was a long pause, while he gazed out at his long view down to the sea. "Home. Home. Magic word," he answered.

Spike Milligan: Icon And Legend, 8pm, next Saturday on BBC2; *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*: According to Spike Milligan is published by Virgin (£15.99)

SIMON ROGGART'S WEEK



Boulder — an oasis of PC values in a pond of rednecks

"I've spent the last week in Boulder, Colorado, in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. On Tuesday there was a heavy snowstorm, but next morning the sun streamed out of a nearly purple dome of a sky. The mountains stand up a hundred yards away, black, white and green, like a natural fortress, or, if you feel less poetic, an old man's teeth. I doubt if there is more beautiful scenery on earth."

Boulder is the setting for the annual Conference on World Affairs, which sounds boring, but isn't. Like most campus towns in the Old West, it is an island of liberal chic amid the gun-toting rednecks and fundamentalists we assume are all around us.

There are headshops, and bookshops, and bike shops, and shops selling Indian artefacts and African pottery. There may be more places offering falafel than hamburgers. And smoking is banned, even in bars. It's not true, as alleged, that the police give an income stick with every speeding ticket, but the bus

drivers can choose their own muzak. Mine on the number 13 picked Mahler. The joke goes: "How many Boulderites does it take to change a lightbulb? None; they just form a support group called 'Coping with darkness'."

On Sunday my hosts and I went to watch a street comedy downtown. He made two-headed balloon animals ("Chernobyl dogs") and terrorised passing motorists by standing in their way and pretending to be a mime. When a man went by on a bike, pulling a sort of wheeled tent with a baby inside, he shrugged scornfully and said: "Boulder dad."

THE CONFERENCE brings together about 120 people from around the world to the University of Colorado. Between us we address about 200 panels, to audiences ranging from a few dozen to more than a thousand. On Wednesday, Studs Terkel, the great historian of 20th-century America, gave an extraordinary speech in a voice which sounded like Jimmy Durante, powerful and funny,

sometimes bitter but just as often hopeful.

One of the more attractive things about American radicals is that, unlike the harsh cynics of the modern British left, they have a terrific streak of optimism. In its way, social justice and union rights are just as much a part of the American dream as two cars and a house with central vacuuming.

He was sharp about the way corporations and technology combine to order us about. "I was in the Atlanta airport, and I caught the little monorail they have there. A young couple ran on as the doors were closing and an electronic disembodied voice said: 'Due to late entry, there will be a 30-second delay,' and everyone just glared furiously at this couple. So I shouted up to the loudspeaker: 'George Orwell — your time has come — and gone,' so they all glared at me instead."

Naturally the number-one subject for the week has been what's known here as the presidential pecker. (You can now buy a "White House intern kit" including a pair

of kneepads and a breath mint. On the Internet you'll find the spooky similarities between Nixon and Clinton: "Nixon was into carpet bombing. Clinton is into carpet burns." Molly Ivins, the celebrated Texan columnist, had just been in Canada. "As you know, our neighbours in the north are the most reasonable people on the face of

One of the attractive things about US radicals is that they have a terrific streak of optimism

the earth. For them, it must be like living next door to the Simpsons." Like many feminists, Molly is on the president's side — a source of some bafflement, especially to those non-feminist men who think his behaviour disgusting and inexcusable. A history professor from Austin, Texas pointed out that if one of his students stripped naked and he took up her offer, he'd be

fired on the spot, rightly. "Why should the president of the United States be held to lower standards?" Molly's general point was that it has nothing to do with Clinton's political skills, which remain considerable. "I think it is possible to have a high moral character, and a messed-up sex life." Even those American liberals who don't believe there is a unified conspiracy against Clinton know that there is a confluence of moneyed interests desperate to get rid of him. I suppose the gist of what they're saying is, "Yes, what he does is unacceptable. But, this is one battle against the Right which we cannot afford to lose." They don't then add: "So we'll just have to swallow hard and put up with it," but that's what they mean.

The other great scandal here has been the murder of six-year-old JonBenet Ramsey, who lived a few doors from the house where I've been staying. JonBenet (pronounced John-Bennay) was a successful competitor in child beauty pageants and was found dead at Christmas 15 months ago. After a

bizarre and plainly incompetent police investigation, her parents skipped town and are now living in Atlanta. The case continues to fascinate and appeal the whole country, most of all here in Boulder, where there are many exotic theories, none of them flattering to the Ramseys.

For one thing child beauty contests (some parents use insulating tape to give their little girls the illusion of cleavage) are totally unfeminist. Children should be taught Tacitus, or a native American language, not to strut round like tiny Monica Lewinskys.

Now a Channel 4 TV crew, with the help of my old friend Mike Tracey, a Brit who teaches here, have secured an interview with the Ramseys — something they have declined to give the police, apart from a brief and inadequate half-hour. Tracey thinks they might well be innocent. Not surprisingly, there is considerable anger, and when folks in Boulder get angry, they know what to do: they have a good long think, and try to see both sides of the question.

The new top Ten

HEAD TO HEAD: SHOULD THE TEN COMMANDMENTS BE MODERNISED?



Yes
Linda Woodhead
Theologian



No
Alice Thomas Ellis
Writer and Catholic

Dear Alice,

I heard you on Desert Island Discs the other day and thought I am, like you, a Christian, what you said made me choke on my Sunday lunch. I think the Ten Commandments may crystallise some of the differences between us. You seem to think that the church (specifically the Roman Catholic church) is the authoritative guardian of unchanging truth; that the Ten Commandments are a very central part of this truth; and that the ill of the modern world can be traced directly to their neglect. If this is what you think then I am in fundamental disagreement. For a start, I am sure there never was a golden age when everyone obeyed the Ten Commandments and everything was orderly. I question the assumption that Christianity is a form of morality. Jesus was always most disturbing to those who set themselves up as guardians of morality, no wonder their descendants try to tame him by turning him into a moral teacher. Jesus displayed a sophisticated, subversive, creative relationship to the Ten Commandments. So should we.

Yours sincerely,
Linda Woodhead
Lecturer in Christian Studies
Lancaster University

Dear Linda,

Sorry about your Sunday lunch. I recommend chewing slowly and thoughtfully. Turning to my copy of the Pentateuch and Exodus, I find the commentary on the Decalogue illuminating and persuasive. Reading further, it becomes clear that there certainly never was a golden age when everyone obeyed the Ten Commandments. If there had been there would, as it were, be no need for them. I don't know what you mean by a "sophisticated, subversive, creative relationship" to the Ten Commandments. I think Our Lord was impatient with empty ritual, the perversion of the intrinsic truth and meaning. This is a constant danger, much in evidence today. The mercy of Christ should not be confused with permissiveness. We need rules and we need a deep understanding of their purpose, rather than adjusting them to suit our inclinations. Do you suggest that they should be altered?

Yours etc,
Alice Thomas Ellis

Dear Alice,

I'm relieved to hear that you don't believe in a golden age, though I'm still worried about your belief that there are unalterable rules for a "human nature" which "does not change". It's not that I don't believe the past can speak to us and inform us. I even believe that God can speak through the Bible. But I believe that He speaks not in timeless moral laws, but through the words of this complex book. My point is not that the Ten Commandments need altering, but that they aren't timeless and don't stand alone. They arise within a specific context, and they have always existed within traditions of interpretation, both Jewish and Christian.

What difference does it make to our understanding of the commandment "honour your father and mother" that Jesus was so rude to his mother? And how should we understand "Thou shalt not kill" given that the Israelites continued to stone adulterers (and others) to death, and Christians quickly developed a just war tradition? You say you are against permissiveness. I say that the alternative "legalism or permissiveness" is false and dangerous. Setting up the Ten Commandments as timeless truths gives people no choice but to take them or leave them. I'm trying to suggest that there's a more interesting and responsible alternative.

Yours sincerely,
Linda

Dear Linda,

I'm so glad you "even believe God can speak through the Bible". I think most Christians do incline to this view. Christ said: "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." He goes on to say, "Honour thy father and mother and he that curseth father or mother; let him die the death." "The words of Our Lord often present a knotty problem to the liberal and the PC. As for being rude to His mother, I suppose the words, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" (at the marriage at Cana) do sound a trifle dismissive to modern ears. However we are assured by various erudite



The original version of "Thou shalt not" — Christian Norton lays down the law. Hollywood-style in Cecil B De Mille's The Ten Commandments

forward prohibitions: 4) Thou shalt not confuse Christianity with family values. 5) Thou shalt not be patronising nor pompous. 6) Thou shalt treat the pronouncements of authorities with an appropriate measure of suspicion. 7) Thou shalt not take thyself too seriously nor talk about thyself too much. 8) Thou shalt never talk about thine own dreams or therapy sessions. 9) Thou shalt not eat noisily in public. My last commandment is for men only, but I think it's important: 10) Thou shalt not refer to women with whom you work as "formidable" or as "a delightful colleague". I hope you have a very happy Easter.

Yours sincerely,
Linda

Dear Linda,

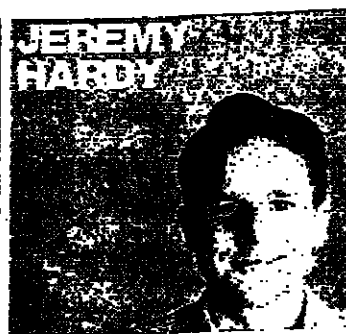
It would certainly help if more people attempted to familiarise themselves with the wider implications of the Ten Commandments. Rabbis, sages, fathers of the church and of course, some ladies have all worked their socks off trying to explain them to a cloth-eared world, but every generation needs educating.

1) "Neighbour" — should include everyone we bump into (see the parable of the Good Samaritan). 2) Enlightened self-interest alone should colour our attitude to the environment, while the evil of cruelty to animals should be self-evident. We should not, however, start inventing goddesses, reverencing shrubs or calling ourselves Starhawk, if for no other reason than that it's plain daft. It affords a certain amount of mirth but gets us no further except up the gum tree. 3) All the People of the Book of the world faiths should be aware that generosity often read as "hospitality", is incumbent on us all.

4) "Family values" means different things to different people. It should not mean exclusivity. A proper understanding of Christianity would be useful here, with the deepest suspicion. They are perceived as liars before they open their mouths. 5) Tell that to the liberals. There is nothing so pompous, patronising or bossy as a liberal in a position of power. 6) I don't think this is necessary. I can think of hardly anyone who doesn't regard those in authority, particularly politicians, with the deepest suspicion. They are perceived as liars before they open their mouths.

7) and 8) These are also self-evident. Pass the message on to the armies of counsellors and therapists who seem to think that talk has miraculously healing properties. 9) Remember to chew properly during Desert Island Discs. 10) Then also remind women not to squawk incessantly about their self-worth, not to raise an eyebrow or lip in contempt whenever a male back is turned and not to jut their jaws aggressively in the manner of so many young actresses and pop stars. It makes them look more like apes than is consonant with human dignity and if taken to excess can only result in dislocation.

I hope you too have a very happy Easter.
Love,
Alice



I want the right to kill myself with vitamin C

I have long been a suspicion that health isn't good for you. As a true Englishman, I have never been or felt well, nor have I trusted people who are or claim to be. To reply, "I'm very well, thank you," when asked how one is, seems to me to be in very poor taste. Moreover, to be concerned with one's own health is the ultimate vanity and self-importance. Only if we have dependants does it really matter whether we live or die. Fear of death is excusable but believing that one should live as long as possible for its own sake is the height of arrogance.

But, as a responsible father, I was just starting to be convinced of the case for taking absurd amounts of vitamin C, and now it seems it can give you cancer. There are, downstairs from me at this moment, slow-release capsules, chewable tablets, big flat ones that make a nice fizzy drink, and even a 60g pot of vitamin C powder, which, if the new research is correct, contains sufficient doses for three years. Chemists are usually reluctant to tell us that almost every branded product on their shelves is available unbranded in a boring container, tucked behind the counter and costing virtually nothing.

The drawback of buying one's C in powdered form, however, is that it doesn't dissolve. All you can do is to swirl a little water or juice for added niceness, until you think the little whirlpool will suspend the sand-like particles and prevent them from sinking until safely swallowed.

And it's all been a waste of time. I've been prompted to try to get more C down me by an osteopath, who told me that an adult living in a natural state before shops and so forth probably ingested about 16g a day, just by picking things from trees and bushes. Osteopaths are expensive and prone to bouts of sudden violence so one doesn't like to think they might be mad. So I'm engaged to make it to three grams one morning and was instantly stricken with crippling diarrhoea.

Of course, there are those who think that the body benefits from purging. Some even pay strangers to shoot lots of water up their bottoms, but they are generally from dysfunctional families. The milder option of laxatives promotes weight-loss, but also malnutrition and soreness. The most effective diet I ever tried was a Chinese meal in Romania, which worked by giving me amoebic dysentery. The weight just fell out.

But worse than the runs is of course the fact that excessive vitamin C seems to increase the number of free radicals in the blood. Although sounding like admirable 19th-century poets, free radicals cause oxidation of the DNA. The new research by Leicester University

indicates that Vitamin C can mop them up as previously believed, but also cause them. But the Government should pause before legislating. A crackdown will cause yet another issue to be appropriated by the Country side Alliance. Ruddy and chortling out-dormen will protest that the nanny state is taking away another cherished freedom, that 18g is the traditional amount, and that turning oranges into tablets is far more humane than taking them. I am glad that nobody seriously believes any longer that Labour is in any way socialist. For it would give socialism a bad name if it appeared to the untutored that the main purpose of the state in a collectivist society is to tell people not to swing on their chairs. This government has done rather a lot to encourage the view that "you can't do anything any more".

Would be libertarians now only have to claim a life-long addiction to oxtail soup in order to pretend that their rights and liberties lie under the urban jackboot. The idea that you can't do anything has gained credence over the past couple of decades, although, in fact, you can do most things. When a person says, "I'm not allowed to say this because it's not politically correct", nothing actually happens to them when they go ahead and say it. Vile racist, sexist and homophobic sentiments are freely expressed throughout the country and throughout the media. When it comes to diet, one is allowed to do pretty much whatever one can afford, with the exception of recreational drugs. None of those posturing nannies in Barbour jackets has a car sticker reading, "Hands off amphetamine sulphate". Similarly none of them

Salmonella is again rife — we shall have to wait and see whether an Egg Tsar is appointed

protests that the price of fresh and uncontaminated fruit and vegetables is way beyond the pocket of a large part of the population.

I suppose the latest group who are preparing to claim that their rural livelihood is about to be destroyed are egg-farmers. It appears that salmonella is as common today as it was in those distant days when Edwina Currie was just some mouthy cow at the Department of Health. So far the Government has merely issued a warning that there is a risk in eating uncooked eggs.

We shall have to wait and see whether an Egg Tsar or Chicken Kaiser is appointed. We don't yet know whether Sealfield-Jack Cunningham will ban the sale of eggs not in powdered form or whether Jack Straw will gather all the spinning wheels in the kingdom and burn them as a precaution.

But I am being unfair. The Government's warning to us not to eat ladders during our bank-holiday DIY frenzy was measured and contained no element of compulsion. No one will be able to claim that the ancient suburban sport of toppling from a first-floor window ledge is under threat. And since the Government is short on practical solutions to improve the nation's health, the occasional bit of homespun wisdom will have to suffice. As Nanny knows, a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down. So, enjoy Easter, but please, go easy on the chocolate — you know it makes sense.

The little sisters Turner and Kate are in the news. Why? Laura Tinsley on the sibling syndrome

Isn't that you know who? Not quite

Send me your email minut

Michael White regrets historic in the age of

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SMALLWEED



URKING in the pages of the latest Eurobarometer — a "running poll" of public opinion across the EU — is a set of figures which ought to bring shame to all who practise my trade. Respondents were asked whether they tended to trust or distrust their radio, TV and press. In Belgium, an imposing 62 per cent trusted the press, while 34 per cent did not; a trust rating of plus 28. The press in the Netherlands (plus 26) and Luxembourg (plus 24) were not far behind. The press was also in credit in Finland (plus 10), Spain (plus 7), France (plus 2), Portugal (plus 2) and Austria (plus 1).

In the other member states, distrusts outnumbered trust — by as many as 22 percentage points in Ireland and 29 points in Greece. Yet even the newspapers of Ireland and

Greece are models of rectitude compared with our own. In the UK, just 15 per cent trusted the press, and 80 per cent distrusted it: a trust rating of minus 65. And it's no good saying, as no doubt somebody will: "This simply shows that Belgians are naive and gullible people who lack Britain's healthy scepticism." For figures elsewhere show Belgium as a land which seethes with distrust. Questions on trust in other institutions in Belgium produced ratings of minus 17 for the unions, minus 23 for the army, minus 30 for the Church, minus 37 for the police, and minus 59 for the legal system.

Compare the figures for Britain: minus 8 for the unions, plus 6 for the legal system, plus 24 for the Church, plus 45 for the police, and plus 61 for the army. What on earth would become of our newspapers were the EU to rule that the press must abstain from criticism of any institution commanding greater trust than itself?

BACKLASH has developed this week against all those seethes with distrust. Questions on trust in other institutions in Belgium produced ratings of minus 17 for the unions, minus 23 for the army, minus 30 for the Church, minus 37 for the police, and minus 59 for the legal system.

Doctor Who. "For our service department, press 1. For the general office, press 2; for one of the chairman's mistresses, 3; for a lecture on the novels of Anthony Trollope, 4; for a wide-ranging survey of the present state of the universe, 5; for a service of complime, 6." And so on. Whichever button you press, what you actually get is further recorded announcements, interspersed with poor old invalid.

The Henry Centre for Forecasting published a survey the other day showing how people hate it, and the BBC's Today programme has a phone-in planned this morning, assuming you ever get through. Yet no one has far mentioned the feature that Smallweed loathes most. The 10 minutes or so of purgatory before you give up and ring off are repeatedly interrupted by two intolerable messages: 1) The person you wish to call knows you've called. 2) Please continue to hold; your call is valuable to us. "If my call is so valuable to you," I scream down the phone, "why don't you tanking well answer it?" But they never take any notice. They just play a bit more Vivid.

SPEAKER Boothroyd's warning this week that toadies rarely get to the top may have been aimed only at new Labour backbenchers, but its implications have caused

huge dismay throughout toadyland generally. Late last night, a spokesman for the Union of Reverential Ingratulators and Handwringers quoted himself as saying that as soon as the Easter recess was over, a delegation bearing a humble address would be making its way on bended knees down Whitehall, caps in hand and fingers on forelocks, to suggest that Ms Boothroyd's remarks felt a milligram short of perfection.

"Her observations," the spokesman said, "appear *prima facie* and *per ardua ad astra* to undervalue the contribution which the servile and unctuous cringer, the creep, the toady, the groveller — make to our national life, in oiling its wheels and keeping its pampers buttered."

"If we are wrong, then of course, we'll be the first to retract what we're saying with the greatest obsequiousness. Yet we have to ask how flourishing institutions like Mrs Thatcher's government or the late, great Robert Maxwell's media empire could have prospered as long as they did without the assistance of toadies. Toadies have long commanded a hallowed place in our national life. Are they now to be crushed under the harrow? While we at URIAH yield to none in recognising Ms Boothroyd as a priceless

national treasure, combining the oratorical power of Demosthenes with the looks of the early Bardot, we at Subservience House do most genuflectingly beg her to consider she may be in error. I'm sorry, that's all I have time for. I'm late for my low-kowling class."

Sources close to URIAH's leadership told Smallweed early today, off the record and under Chatham House rules, that the Speaker's remarks were all the more wounding since they came a time when the vast mass of the toady industry had lately been so gravely denuded, so many of its most accomplished practitioners having been elected to Parliament just under a year ago.

IN THE MANY and justified tributes paid to the BBC adaptation of Our Mutual Friend, by Charles Dickens, I have not seen the movie mentioned. Most people may hardly have noticed it. That indeed was its merit. Unlike some of the noisy, boastful stuff in the cinema which bullies you into thinking a movie is moving, you had here to make a point of listening out for it to appreciate how much it enriched the proceedings by its subtle allusions to the various moods of the story. The composer was Adrian Johnston.

Doonesbury Flashbacks



THE BEST OF MY WEEK...

SAYS NICHOLAS SNOWMAN: "Was when Sir George Christie told me I was to be Glyde-bourne's next general director. The euphoria kept me awake all night. On Sunday, Hector, my son, and I went to Birmingham where Arsenal's convincing win in the FA Cup semi-final was followed by what seemed the best pizzas the world has ever known. On Monday I told my colleagues at the South Bank Centre of my impending move. Let's hope Arsenal win the double."

سكنا من الامم

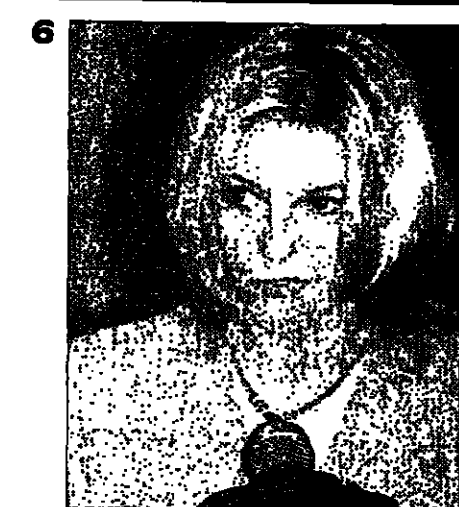
The little sisters of Anthea Turner and Kate Winslet are in the news this week. Why? **Laura Thompson** on the sibling syndrome

Isn't that you know who? Not quite



Blood relatives or bloody relatives? How many of these people, all related to a more famous person, can you identify? Answers at foot of page

PHOTOGRAPHS BY: DAVID SINCLAIR, BARRY PHILLIPS, RICHARD KILLE, KEN MCKAY, J. SILVERSTEIN, GERRY WILKINSON



It is known as Mike McGear Syndrome. Those afflicted are the siblings — usually same sex — of famous people, and their condition takes the form of a desire to compete with the celebrity of their brother or sister. Often, they do the same job that made the sibling famous in the first place; equally often, they do it less well.

So, for example, let's say that you have an older brother somewhat gifted in the songwriting/performing business. He has achieved celebrity, success and considerable wealth. He is, in fact, Paul McCartney. Understandably, you — Mike McGear, his younger sibling — are tempted to graze upon the luscious veldt that Paul inhabits. So what do you do? You form your own band, Scaffold, and give the world Lily The Pink.

In fact, Lily The Pink is a bit of a whoop and Mike McGear — by changing his surname and having a laugh — could never really be accused of living in Paul McCartney's shadow, nor of hanging on to the coat-tails of his fame. He was an ironic celebrity sibling; a sort of singing Terry Major-Ball.

Accusations are far more likely to be levelled at those of the same name, ambitions and appearance as their better-known kin. Over the past week two young women, Wendy Turner, sister of Anthea, and Beth Winslet, sister of Kate, have leapt to public prominence. Turner gave herself a role in Anthea's recent love

drama by telling the press exactly what she thought of Anthea's ex-lover, Grant Bowler.

Meanwhile Beth Winslet, a younger, slightly diminished version of her sumptuous sister, was featured in several newspaper articles previewing her debut last night in BBC1's *The Sould's Bride*. The temptation to mention Kate in every other sentence was not resisted.

The celebrity sibling has been with us for years, since Chris Jagger (younger brother of Mick), helped McGear develop the patent. Recently though, the syndrome seems to have reached epidemic proportions. This may reflect the fact that fame, nowadays, is ever more widespread and apparently incursive. You enjoy celebrity status, goes the thinking, so why on earth shouldn't I?

So Wendy Turner is a television presenter, just like Anthea. Kim Fyfe is an actress, just like Gillian who left *EastEnders* last night. Andy York plays in a band you may not have heard of, Unbelievable Truth, but you will have heard of the one his brother Thom is in — Radiohead. Danni Minogue is a late 20th-century Renaissance woman, actress, singer, midriff-bearer — just like Kylie. And so the list goes on, and on...

Of course, siblings should have the right to pursue whatever career they choose. If they have a talent, how unfair it would be to bar them on the grounds that someone else in the family got there first. Why

should they become a vet, or a Princess Margaret, instead?

And yet you cannot help wondering what it is that motivates them to follow so closely — slavishly even — in their sibling's footsteps? How can the more successful of the two refrain from mistrust at the sight of the other's attempts to muscle in on their territory? How can the aspirant not be motivated by a powerful desire to compete with, upstage, the other?

As a female friend puts it: "If we were in the same line of work, I know that I couldn't bear to be beaten to top dog position by my sister." Sisters are traditionally more prey to mutual jealousies than brothers. But still the question

remains: did Dave Davies really want to be Ray?

Sibling rivalry is largely unavoidable, even in the most banal of circumstances. If it can happen over who gets the last Wagon Wheel, imagine how it might escalate when an Oscar is the prize (indeed, when Joan Fontaine won one, her sister Olivia de Havilland refused to speak to her for about a decade).

What happens between celebrity siblings in private, or in the pages of the tabloids, is one thing. Public reaction is another; and there is no denying that the public is rather fascinated by the public. The clams, too, seem to get by — no one ever said that Joely Richardson was trying to steal elder sister

They will watch, say, Wendy Turner on the television, all the while searching for the resemblance to her sister, and they will think: "Well, there's nothing wrong with her, but would she be there if it weren't for Anthea? And isn't one Anthea enough anyway? Do we need to have her designer-label-free clone as well?"

Of course, there are those siblings who, while pursuing the same high-profile careers, manage not to encroach upon each other. Sophie Thompson and Joseph Flannery are both successful actors independent of Emma and Ralph. The clams, too, seem to get by — no one ever said that Joely Richardson was trying to steal elder sister

Natasha's limelight, for the simple reason that Redgrave is born standing in the glare of the sun.

On the whole, however, the sudden emergence into the public sphere of that younger brother or sister, spinning those breathless tales of "Oh, I've always wanted to act as well", "Oh, there's no rivalry between us", "Oh, my name has never helped me at auditions", is met nowadays with a cynical groan. If the talent is strong enough, or different enough, then the celebrity sibling can win through. If not — and usually it isn't — it is back to the OE! magazine fashion shoots.

For celebrity is concerned with the pursuit of singleness,

or individuality. It is perhaps the most solipsistic state known to humanity, and this is what audiences both perceive and adore. They are compelled by that celebration of the individual and they don't really want to see a lesser, diluted, unoriginal version of what they know and love.

They don't want to see a familiar face looking the same, but somehow wrong. They don't want to be reminded that here is the earthbound clay from which a more magical being was created. They feel, obscurely, that the celebrity sibling is taking away some of what makes the celebrity special; and if they feel that, how much more might the celebrities themselves?

Lend me your ears a minute

Michael White regrets the dearth of rhetoric in the age of soundbites



They may have been momentous times in Belfast, but it was not a great week for immortal prose. Not when John Major had to lecture the rest of us on the dangers of political cliché and David Hill, Labour's chief spokesman, since Keir Hardie's youth, finally hung up his spin doctor's stethoscope. More tragically still, Tony Blair drew a disrespectful belly laugh from chattering types when he flew off to the peace talks. Explaining that it was no time for soundbites, the Prime Minister spoiled the effect a few seconds later by adding: "I feel the hand of history upon our shoulders."

Blair knew what he was up to and so did his audience. It must be

40 years since Harold Macmillan, Britain's first fully-literate premier, leaped into the camera and confided: "I can tell you between these four walls..."

Blair's seemingly spontaneous burst of raw grief on the morning of Princess Diana's death was a masterpiece. As we subsequently discovered, he articulated the public mood. More than anything else, the incident cemented his authority, the function of the spoken word in every society not ruled by brute force and, as elderly Germans can confirm, by some of those as well.

But why is modern political discourse rarely in danger of reaching sublime or demagogic heights? TV is the chief culprit, as everyone knows. People do not go to public

meetings to hear Mr Gladstone any more, except in Cuba where they recently got a great authoritarian double bill: Fidel Castro and John Paul II. They listen on radio or — less analytically, more intuitively — watch on television.

It was on TV that Kennedy beat the swarthy, sweaty Nixon in that 1960 debate. On radio Nixon sounded more knowledgeable (he was). On a microphone, but you are actually addressing only one person, not the Albert Hall. It was a point the great orator, Nye Bevan, never grasped. Ditto Michael Heseltine on the Today programme.

So the most successful politicians since the fifties have usually been those who mastered the con-

versational technique: Macmillan, Harold Wilson, "Uncle Jim" Callaghan in his way, homely Helmut Kohl, certainly the dazzling Ronald Reagan and his imitator, Bill Clinton, who could reach out and touch their audiences.

Reagan was an actor as well as a populist, which helped. When the ubiquitous microphone makes it safer to stick to the script than risk spontaneously a fund of learned lines and trusted anecdotes works.

Margaret Thatcher lacked grace or natural wit (Blair is a little similar), but was a raw force of nature which made up for quite a lot. Michael Foot and Roy Jenkins, both formidable and cerebral speakers, lacked the common touch for audiences at home. Neil

Kinnock, at his best a marvellous Bevanite platform speaker, could also be fatally prolix.

On 1986's front benches Gordon Brown (far funnier when he is relaxed) and William Hague probably have the most versatile potential. Oddly enough Enoch Powell and Tony Benn, Britain's best orators of recent years, masters of tricks of rhythm and repetition that an ancient Greek would have admired, could also handle radio and TV at every level — Radio 1 as deftly as Panorama. So could François Mitterrand, despite his cultivated grandeur, possibly because of it.

A generational factor is at work here. That disparate trio of Powell, Tony Benn and François Mitter-

rand straddle the leisurely past when educated politicians read books, and the frantic present when most of their peers rely on Alastair Campbell, David Hill, Bernard Ingham and their kind to tell them what's happened in the global village — and how they must respond in p.d.m.n.s. language: short and snappy.

Churchill and De Gaulle, both still active into the 1960s, were memorable wartime broadcasters, but also educated Victorians, prepared to learn their speeches by heart. Churchill tried TV a couple of times and Macmillan through Glibson, and he was in direct line of descent from classical oratory. He possessed the kind of oratorical skills that are dying, if Professor David Purdie, who addressed this week's Classics Association meeting, is to be believed.

Contemporary rhetoric is further diminished by short Commons speeches and made-for-TV soundbites. Whereas a speech once educated and impressed audiences, (jokes and *afios*, according to Aristotle's categories) now it tends to rest mainly on *pathos*, the appeal to emotions, which is where those spin doctors and their focus-group-tested phrases come in.

But let's not knock the soundbite. We may depend more on the Brothers Scatchi than the Brothers Gracchi (two Roman Bennites), but Cicero's great campaign slogan, "Carthago delenda est", still resonates. Carthage was destroyed — and stayed destroyed.

A few years later Jesus of Nazareth came up with some great soundbites about rich men and the

eyes of needles, about love, about rendering unto Caesar. It helps to have some snappy slogans and Churchill's greatest speeches are dotted with them. "The Few", the "Finest Hour", all that fighting on the beaches. They already have a distant ring to them. At the time, they did the business, except among the upper classes who thought them vulgar.

Which is why John Major had a point on Tuesday night. He used the National Lottery debate to warn ministers against excessive, clichéd use of "The People's..." as in the People's Lottery, Monarchy, Princess, Money He implied at this stage in the 20th century it has come to mean just the opposite, as in People's Democratic Republics.

In other words, where soundbites are a substitute for substance, those who live by them can just as easily perish the same way. After sex scandals engulfed the Tories, Macmillan's "You've never had it so good" became "so often". Ditto Wilson's well-meant remark about "the pound in your pocket" not being devalued. It was, as was the language. Un consumers all know how advertising works, and was betide duff products. "We are the masters now," Labour's Hartley Shawcross told the Commons in April 1946. Actually, he didn't quite, but it's a very good soundbite.

Answers to quiz: 1) Wendy Turner; 2) Mike McGear; 3) Robbie Jackson, Michael's sister; 4) Danni Minogue; 5) Chris Jagger; 6) Lauren Booth, Charles's half-sister; 7) Paul Gaddagher, brother of Liam and Noel; 8) Don Doo Piffner, Michael's sister; 9) Don Swazey, Patrick's brother; 10) Beth Winslet

Lure of the Red Planet

The man who made Titanic is now going to tackle Mars. But why does the planet so stir the imagination? Novelist **Paul McAuley** drops in on the little green men

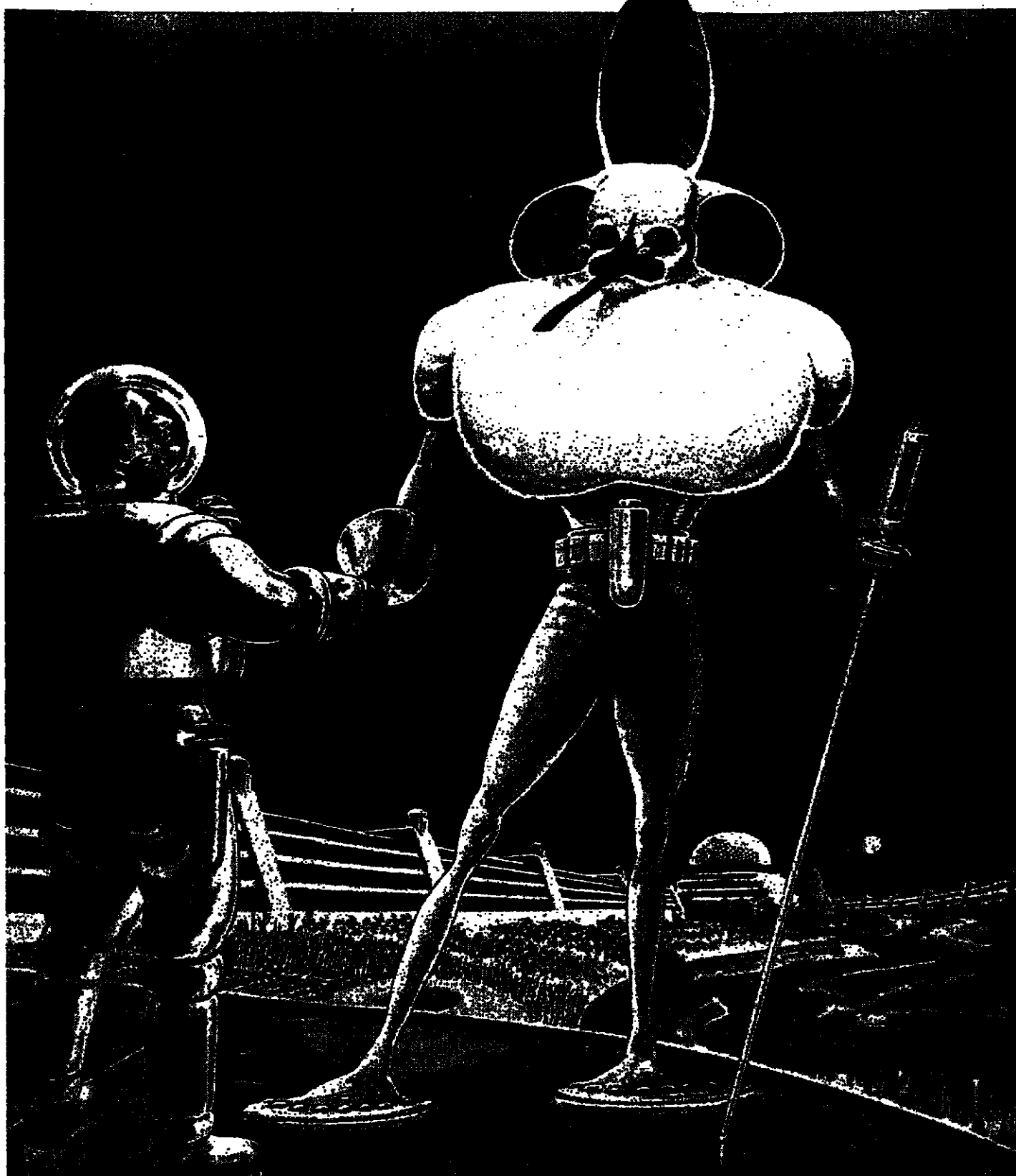
We learned this week that Titanic director James Cameron is to make a TV series from Kim Stanley Robinson's epic science fiction trilogy about the colonisation of Mars. Perhaps it shouldn't have come as a great surprise. As a director, producer and scriptwriter, Cameron has always been attracted to primal SF tropes, from the time-travel of the two Terminator movies to the Spam-in-a-space-can thrills of Aliens, the first contact of Abyss and the underbelly of virtual reality in the millennial thriller Strange Days. And, like Titanic, Robinson's triple-decker Red Mars, Blue Mars and Green Mars is a story not only of survival against the odds but of technology pushed to its breaking point.

It's also set on one of science fiction's favourite locations, and the next destination for human space travel. Mars, bright and blood-red in the night sky, has tantalised the human imagination for centuries. It is the most Earth-like of the planets in the Solar System, and ever since the invention of the telescope, Earth-bound observers have made wild guesses about the features that can be glimpsed on its surface. Most famously, the Italian astronomer Schiaparelli recorded linear markings, which he called *canali*, or channels, on his map of Mars in 1878. *Canali* was mistranslated into English as "canals", provoking a wave of excited conjecture about intelligent Martian life.

The most fervent believer in Martians was Percival Lowell, an eccentric amateur astronomer from a wealthy Boston family. Lowell built an observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona, with the express purpose of observing Mars, produced elaborate maps of Martian canals, and in his 1895 book Mars spun fanciful theories about the civilisations that must have built them to transport water from the poles to still, arid equatorial regions. According to Lowell, the seasonal wave of darkening seen near the north polar cap marked the melting of ice and subsequent growth of vegetation as water percolated across the land.

Lowell's vision of a cool, dry Mars cradling ancient civilisations inspired a clutch of turn-of-the-century SF writers, most famously HG Wells. The Martians in his 1898 novel *The War of the Worlds*, their intellects "vast and cold and unsympathetic", contemptuous of Victorian steam technology as they laid waste to London, were forerunners of the aggressive aliens of countless pulp novels and B movies.

In 1917 Edgar Rice Burroughs published *A Princess of Mars*, the



first of the 11-volume Barsoom saga, in which warrior races struggled in eternal war across dry ocean beds. Mars is smaller than Earth and its gravity weaker, so Burroughs's human heroes were capable of great feats of strength and derring-do, fighting off ravenous monsters and rescuing naked princesses from the clutches of evil green Martians who (like the Martians of Tim Burton's movie *Mars Attacks!*) delighted in tormenting their enemies.

Not all fictional Martians were as belligerent as their planet's namesake, the Roman god of war. The Martians of German writer Kurd Lasswitz's *Two Planets*, published a year before *The War of the Worlds*, were technologically superior to humans, but brought universal peace once we could prove that we deserved it. CS Lewis's various Martian races in *Out of The Silent Planet* were our theological rather than technological superiors, an idea echoed in the blatant propaganda of the

movie *Red Planet* Mars from the communist-baiting fifties, which suggested that the discovery of Martians with a direct line to God could topple the Evil Empire of the Soviet government. In the 1930 movie *Rocketship X-M* the lesson was more salutary: human explorers discover Martians reduced to savages by atomic war, but every one dies before the lesson can be applied to Earth. And in the very silly movie *Santa Claus Conquers The Martians*, humans introduce bellicose Martians to the joys of Christmas.

The theme of an ageing, dry Mars littered with relics of an ancient civilisation found its most romantic realisation in Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles*, published in 1950 and later turned into a faithful but wooden TV mini-series in 1980. Bradbury's Martians were an ethereal, poetic race who built crystal cities along slowly silting canals, dying out as soon as brash American astronauts arrived to pollute the

dreaming red sands with their guns, raucous music and hamburger stands. The *Martian Chronicles* began the suburbanisation of Mars: "They brought 15,000 lumber feet of Oregon pine to build Tenth City, and 79,000 feet of California redwood, and they hammered together a clean, neat little town by the edge of the stone canals... It was as if, in many ways, a great earthquake had shaken loose the roots and cellars of an Iowa town, and then, in an instant, a whirlwind twister of Oz-like proportions had carried the entire town off to Mars to set it down without a bump..."

In *The Martian Chronicles* and novels like Arthur C. Clarke's *The Sands of Mars*, Judith Merrill and Cyril Kornbluth's *Outpost Mars*, and Philip K. Dick's *Martian Time-Slip*, the Red Planet was seen as a place where, with a little water and a few pressure domes, it would be quite easy for ordinary folk to live. It might even be possible to venture out onto the surface with little

more protection than a face mask, and to farm the red soil with your bare hands.

The first robot probes to Mars shattered this cosy vision. In the late sixties, America's Mariner fly-by probes snatched pictures of a dead globe battered with craters, and distinctly lacking canals. Refinements in telescopes and spectroscopy showed that Mars was about as habitable as the Moon. The average surface temperature is far below the freezing point of water. The desiccated Martian atmosphere is mostly carbon dioxide at a vanishingly low pressure. The shrinkage of the polar caps in summer is due not to melting of water ice but to sublimation of carbon dioxide snow: the waves of darkening come not from seasonal growth of vegetation but from storm-driven changes in deposition of surface dust. If humans are to survive on the surface, they would have to wear pressure suits or become cyborgs, as in Fred Pohl's grim *Man Plus*.



Take me to your reader... left, man meets Martian in the magazine *Fantastic Adventures*. Above, James Cameron and the "face" on Mars. PHOTOGRAPH: MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY, ASSOCIATED PRESS



By 1971, when Mariner 9 arrived in orbit to find a vast dust storm obscuring the planet from its cameras, the public had lost interest. The Mariners and the less successful Russian Mars probes greatly increased our knowledge of the planet, but killed off the idea of Mars as a place to live as surely as they killed off dreams of Barsoom or ancient crystal cities by stone canals. In *Rocket Man*, Elton John sang, "Mars ain't the kind of place to raise your kids." NASA's plans to launch manned expeditions to Mars were scrapped; SF writers turned to other themes.

All this changed in 1976, when the two Viking landers transmitted the first pictures from the Martian surface, and the orbiters relayed back 55,000 high-resolution images. The landers looked for life and did not find it, but the pictures from the orbiters did confirm hints from Mariner 9's limited survey Mars turned out to be not an uninteresting desert, but a place of superlatives.

Every geological feature on Mars is a magnitude bigger than its equivalent on Earth. Mars has the biggest volcanoes, the largest impact basin, the biggest canyons and the longest channels of any planet or moon in the Solar System. And it has dried-up water channels and huge flood basins. There may no longer be liquid water on the surface of Mars, but there may have once been rivers and even oceans.

The dream of ancient Martian artifacts was a long time dying; they turned up as giant atmosphere-regenerating plants in Paul Verhoeven's 1990 movie adaptation of a Philip K. Dick short story, *Total Recall* (now slated to be sequenced as a TV series). And a few people claimed to be able to see, in Viking photographs of the Cydonia region, evidence of a ruined Martian city centred around a gigantic carving of a human face, although recent close-ups taken by the Mars Global Surveyor probe show that the "face on Mars" is as much an optical illusion as Lowell's canals. And yet, while the Mariner and Viking surveys demolished one dream, the first detailed maps of the Martian surface stimulated the imagination of a new generation of scientists and writers.

The nineties have seen a resurgence in SF novels about Mars. Some, like Ben Bova's *Mars* or Allen Steele's *Labyrinth of Night*, are set on the Mars mapped by Viking but include discoveries of alien artifacts that stubbornly hark back to older SF dreams. Stephen Baxter's *Voyage* is a dream of what might have been if NASA had not

flattered after the Mariner pictures. Terry Bisson's *Voyage To The Red Planet* is a sharp satire about a commercially funded expedition to make the first movie on Mars.

Other novels examine the scientifically plausible idea that if Mars once had shallow seas and a denser, warmer atmosphere, then these might be regenerated by massive feats of planetary engineering or terraforming. After Viking, Mars is no longer seen as a battered desert world, but as a dry planet-sized beach whose long-lost seas could be regenerated.

Enthusiasts believe that a terraformed Mars might be a place to start afresh, to build an entirely new civilisation that will not incorporate the tragedies and horrors of human history. If terraforming is possible, it is possible to think of a Martian Utopia.

This seductive vision is at the heart of Greg Bear's *Moving Mars*, my own *Red Dust* (in which the Chinese get to terraform Mars instead of the usual American crew), and Kim Stanley Robinson's epic trilogy, which runs to over 1,500 crowded pages.

In this ambitious and densely imagined work, with a large cast of long-lived characters, Robinson seamlessly traces a future history from the first steps on the Martian surface, through the race to exploit the Red Planet, to the war for independence from Earth and the firmament of a Martian constitution. He familiarises us with the vast scale and wonders of the planet, the immensity of the task of terraforming, and the practicalities not only of colonisation but of realising a new way of making civilisation work. And he acknowledges the history of human dreams about Mars — wells that feed water to the sun, are named after authors of Martian novels. It is the culmination of scientific and imaginative investigation of post-Viking Mars.

Cameron's announcement of his intention to dramatise Robinson's trilogy comes when we are poised at the beginning of a new wave of Martian exploration. Mars Pathfinder and its brave little robot, Sojourner, and the Mars Global Surveyor, which has just begun to take the first of many thousands of highly detailed close-up photographs of the Martian surface, are the first in a series of sophisticated probes that will be sent to Mars at every available launch window for the next eight years. We cannot guess what they will discover; nor can we guess what dreams will be inspired by those discoveries. We do know that they will be stranger and more wonderful than we can imagine.

Paul McAuley's *Red Dust* is published by Vista, price £5.99.

Shola Ama with Craig Armstrong,
Damon Albarn with Michael Nyman, The Divine Comedy,
Marianne Faithfull, Bryan Ferry,
Elton John, Paul McCartney, Pet Shop Boys, Vic Reeves, Space,
Sting, Suede featuring Raissa,
Texas, Robbie Williams

Twentieth Century Blues
The Songs of Noël Coward
Album released 13 04 98.



Theatre has no place in the modern world? What total rubbish, says Michael Kustow

Save our stages

PROVOCATIONS

Theatre is being squeezed, shrunk and simplified. Does this matter to anyone but theatre-buffs? I think it should. At stake is more than just the survival of a two-millennia-old art form. At stake are basic ideas of self and society, the solitary and the shared. They are already being, as computerspeak puts it, "reconfigured" by the hurricane homogenisation of global capitalism and digital communication.

A few weeks ago, I talked to a pale young woman in a London cyber café. She told me about a "cyber wedding" in which the bride was in London, the groom in Australia and the priest in America. At the end of the ceremony, the bride embraced her husband by kissing the screen.

Truly this is a simulacrum of contact. It is a world away from playing along with actors playing parts in a fictional story we watch with others, with whom we make believe. When the chemistry of performance and audience encounter succeeds, such a shared experience can enlarge our insights and emotions, so that theatre becomes a metaphor of real society, the kind Mrs Thatcher dismissed in her vision of a world book-ended by the family and the market.

Today, theatre has not been invited to join the Government's

"creative industries" alongside films, fashion and pop, perhaps because it's handmade rather than industrial — except in the case of Lloyd Webber-style musicals, whose productions are cloned for world capitals. Theatre has been exiled from the Dome, with the cancellation of an ambitious community-theatre piece performed by young people from all over Britain. Our leading theatre companies totter with vast deficits, while the Lottery dispensation is redrafted.

Meanwhile, sharp columnists and Mephistophelean spinmeisters keep theatre out of the equation altogether, though it may hold better answers to the search for a better civil society than think-tanks. The original god of theatre was Dionysus, the god of comedy, tragedy and disreputable satyr-play, and of wine and ecstasy. Perhaps the Dionysian spirit, unruly and incontinent, is just too untidy for the gaggle of image-makers, mood-managers and focus-groupers the Government is listening to. "Theatre is entirely superfluous," Bertolt Brecht said late in his life. This would delight the place performed by young people from all over Britain. Our leading theatre companies totter with vast deficits, while the Lottery dispensation is redrafted.

Michael Kustow's series *Dionysus And The Mighty Mouse* continues tonight at 10.35pm on Radio 3.

GINGER BEER TO RABBIT ABOUT



HOT FROM JAMAICA

سونا من الامم

The US Masters

David Davies at Augusta reports on how even experienced bad-weather players suffered as the strong, cold wind continued to make conditions difficult

Bedraggled Ballesteros sums it up

TIGER WOODS and Fuzzy Zoeller touched gloves and promised a good clean fight at the start of the second round at Augusta National golf club yesterday. In fact, they shook hands on the 1st tee, smiled and went about their business in the normal way, while several thousand curious spectators looked in vain for any sign of animosity. Maybe, just maybe, the alleged animosity between the two will now be laid to rest.

The weather continued to plague participants yesterday. A cold, strong wind made the National extremely difficult for the second day running, and even experienced bad-weather players such as Severiano Ballesteros suffered.

The Spaniard made a scintillating start, with an eagle at the long 2nd, but thereafter it was downhill to disaster. He bogeyed all but two of the remaining holes on the first nine and then, at the 15th, the hole that cost him the 1986 Masters when he hit a four-iron into the lake in front of the green, he took a quadruple bogey-nine. By now he was nine over for the round, 15 over for the tournament and a thoroughly bedraggled Ballesteros.

Lee Westwood, who on Sunday won the New Orleans Classic, was much the more consistent. Although he dropped a shot at the 2nd, he immediately birdied the 3rd and 6th, at which point he was only one over for the tournament and four behind the overnight leader, Fred Couples. Colin Montgomerie, though, one-under overnight, hit a dreadful second shot to the 1st hole, to bogey, and drop out of the top 10.

Woods played the 1st, again into the wind, in exemplary fashion, getting his par, but Zoeller, for whom these conditions are anathema, dropped a shot to move back to level par.

With the cut looking to be something like three over par, Darren Clarke, four over at the start of the day, needed a good round to stay for the weekend in his first Masters. He went to the turn in 36, level par, but dropped a shot at the 10th and failed to get the birdie offered by the 13th and had a struggle on his hands.

Ian Woosnam, another who normally relishes difficult conditions, was 74 overnight and after eight holes yesterday had neither improved nor

worsened that position. But Nick Faldo, in contention overnight, needed to make a good start for the sake of building on a confidence that has been fragile this season. Instead he bogeyed the 1st and 2nd, to be two over par for the tournament.

Shades of St Andrews. When Faldo abandoned play for the day in the first round on Thursday it was much more of a tactical move than a concession to approaching darkness. Faldo, winner of the Green Jacket in 1988 and 1990, was on the 17th green when it was announced players could stop there and then, or complete the hole they were on.

As Faldo had a six-foot putt for a birdie, and as he had

Seve made a scintillating start but thereafter it was downhill to disaster

birdied the previous two holes, it would have made sense for him to attempt to hole out. The momentum was with him and he was on course for a back nine of 33, so salvaging a 72 from the wreckage of an outward half of 39.

Surprisingly to the observer, Faldo elected to mark his ball and leave the putt to his caddy. The morning, a decision that seemed to fly in the face of golfing good sense. In fact, it was not until yesterday, after Faldo had returned and holed the putt, that the reason for his departure was revealed.

His manager John Simpson said: "There was a large spike mark directly on his line, big enough to deflect the ball away from the hole. Nick thought if he left the putt overnight the mark might well have disappeared by the morning — and it had."

Faldo's decision, after all, was sensible, and this time controversial. On one occasion when he abandoned play overnight it was in medal-match play and he was accused of gamesmanship. That was in the 1988 semi-final of the Dunhill Cup at St Andrews and he was playing the Irishman Des Smyth late

in the day. A Scottish hair descended on the course, swirling around and making visibility clear one moment, impossible the next.

The two men had reached the 18th and Smyth played his second on to the green. Faldo, one down and needing to get close, clearly decided he was not going to play his shot, despite the fact that there were several literal windows of opportunity. There was boozing from the largely Scottish crowd around the green as he walked off, and Smyth was not pleased either.

When they returned the following morning some students in the halls of residence behind the 18th green had hung banners from the upstairs windows reading: "Hit It Here Nick!" and "Can You See Us Now?" Faldo hit his shot to seven feet but, needing to hole it to take the match to extra holes, missed. Smyth won and took his team into the finals, where they won again.

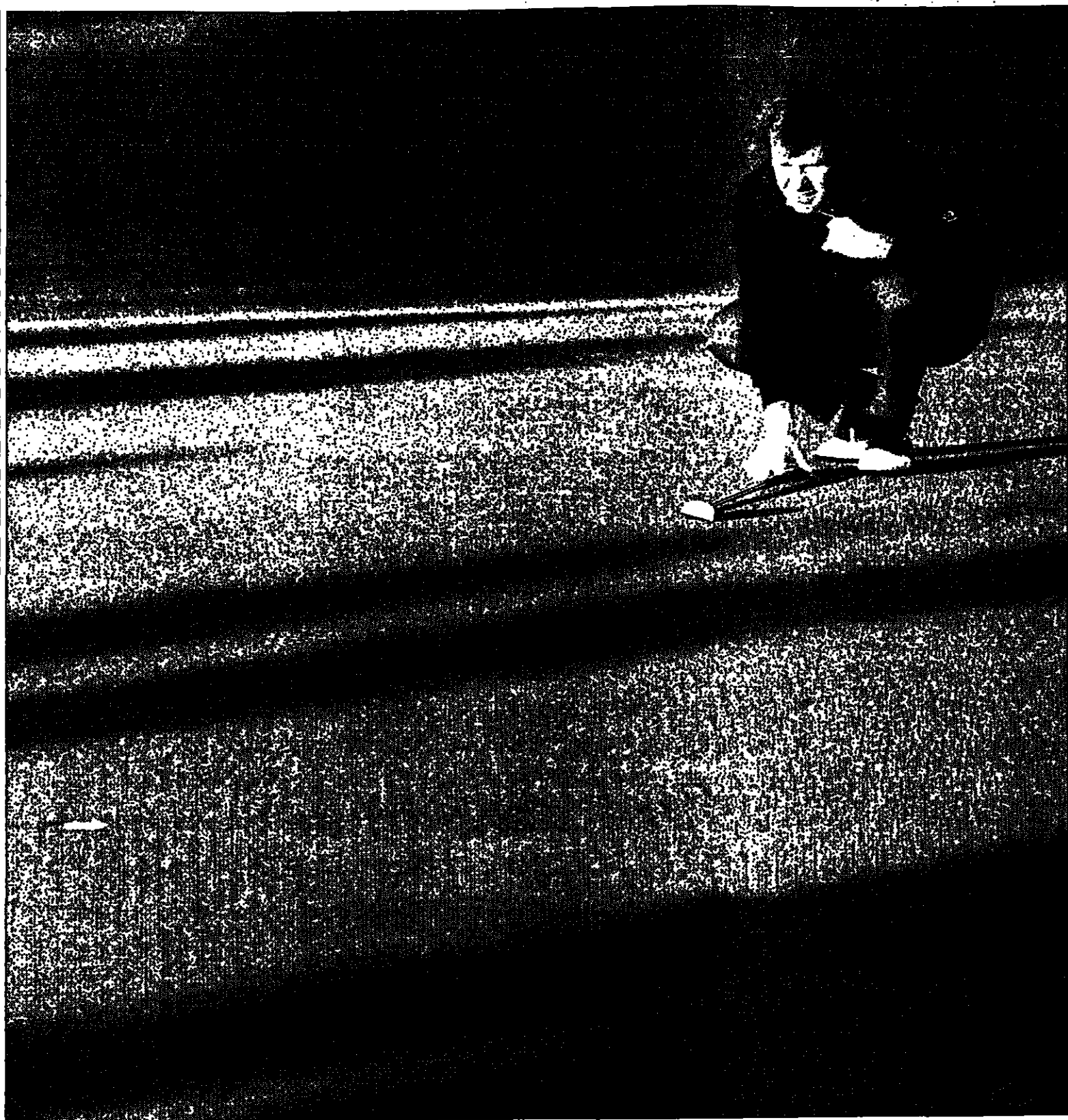
Faldo's official explanation for marking his ball on the 17th hole was: "It was dark, damp and cold and there was no point in rushing." It meant though that he had a 5am alarm call to return to the course, where, of course, he holed the putt and then missed a 12-foot birdie attempt on the 18th.

His 72 represented good value after a shaky start in which he bogeyed the first two holes and went to the turn in a three-over-par 39. "At that stage," said Faldo after his round, "I realised I was not playing badly, things were just not going my way and if I could just hang on I could turn it around."

He added: "I have never known Augusta in such conditions. The wind made it exceptionally severe."

Montgomerie also rescored a score over the back nine, playing the kind of round he may have been incapable of up until this year. The Scot has long felt that Augusta, with its predominance of right-to-left dog-legs, does not suit his left-to-right game.

But during practice rounds this week he realised that with his power and touch he could birdie every hole anyway, and that determination rescued his first round. He was two over after six holes and still one over after 12, but had three birdies from that point and finished tied for 5th, a result that may have been beyond him in previous years.



Shadow lands... Nick Faldo lines up a putt on the 18th soon after dawn yesterday when he completed his first round

ANDREW REDINGTON

First-round scores

(US unless stated; * = amateur)

69
F Couples
70
P Stanekow
J M Gharabai (Sp)
S Hoch
71
P Azinger
P Blomster
F Zoeller
Woods
C Montgomerie (GB)
D Duval
72
G Brewer
J Haas
O Browne
J Maggert
M Kuchner
N Faldo (GB)
D Frost (SA)
73
C Pavin
S Fason
S McCarron
T Kile
L Mike
M Bradley
J Neftci
74
W Wood
B Tway
J Kriebel
A Magoo

R Floyd
R Clark
S Lyle (GB)
P-J Johnson (Swe)
M O'Meara
N Gossens (SA)
M Calaverchia
L Westwood (GB)
D Lyle
I Woosnam (GB)
J Leonard
P Middleton
S Maruyama (Japan)
75
D Tuma
T Toles
S Andrade
T Hughes (Aus)
S Elkington (Aus)
M Oost (Japan)
S Langner (Ger)
J Pernmarck (Swe)
N Price (Zim)
S Eke (SA)
S Jones
C Cook
76
R B Brown
Moryl
D Clarke (GB)
J Furr
J Hiron
L Jordan
G Norman (Aus)
V Singh (Pak)
77
D Ogryn

G Player (SA)
J Huston
S Appleby (Aus)
J Daly
F Nobilo (NZ)
78
J Watson
S Ballesteros (Sp)
J Shuman
79
C Coody
F Funk
A Palmer
S Hertzberg (Swe)
C Watson
C Shuller
S Simpson
80
T Clark (SA)
J Lehman
81
S Casper
J Aaron
C Rozsa (It)
82
W Bakst
S Glasmon
M Brooks
83
D Crenshaw
84
J Garrido (Sp)
85
D Ford

David Duval slipped his name on to the leaderboard yesterday when he completed the weather-delayed first round with a 71 that left him just two shots adrift of the leader Fred Couples. Duval, one of 10 players who did not complete Thursday's opening round, which was delayed 80 minutes by weather, joined five others, including Tiger Woods, at 71 after playing his final three holes in par on a cool breezy morning. Shigeki Maruyama of Japan, who had been even par after 15 holes on Thursday in his first Masters, bogeyed the 16th and 17th holes to post 74. One of the biggest surprises was 65-year-old Gary Brewer, the 1989 champion, who shot a level par 72, joining Jeff Maggert, Jay Haas and two Masters rookies, Tim Enevold and the US Amateur champion Matt Kuchar. Brewer, who played in the first two rounds of the day and became the oldest player ever to match par at the Masters, proved to be an inspiration for Couples. After he and his caddy noticed Brewer's name on top of the leaderboard, Couples said: "My caddy told me 'You need to play better to beat this guy.' We were talking about it all day." The windy conditions were so severe that Tom Watson, an excellent wind player, kept his tee shot in the bushes behind the 15-yard 12th. He wound up making a five on the famous par-five and shooting 78. The two-time champion Ben Crenshaw summed up the general feeling after the trying day. "I need an antihistamine," he said, after an 85.

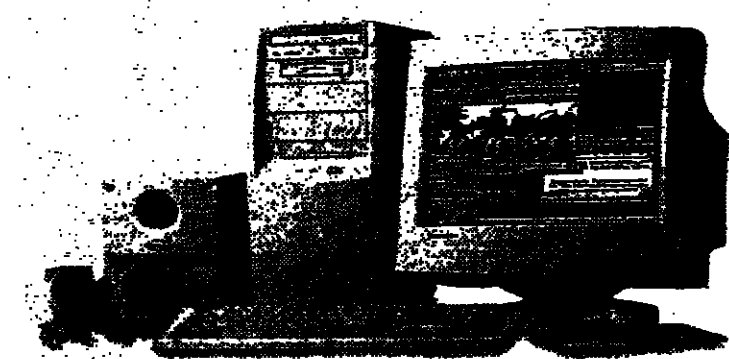
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Boxing

Former world champion in fatal crash

JOHNNY TATE, who held the World Boxing Association heavyweight title for a brief spell in 1979-80, is reported to have been killed in a road accident in the United States.

Tate was travelling in Knoxville, Tennessee, when his pickup truck hit a telephone pole and rolled over, according to ESPN television. Two passengers travelling with Tate were injured.

Tate won the vacant WBA title on October 20, 1979, with a 15-round decision over Gerrie Coetzee of South Africa. In the first defence of his title on March 31, 1980, he was knocked out by Mike Weaver in the 15th round.

A 1976 Olympic bronze medalist in the super heavyweight division, Tate won 84 professional fights and lost three.

Matt Brown, from Walworth, having failed in his first British title attempt last November, has a second chance to claim a domestic championship when he fights Wayne Rigby of Manchester at London's Elephant and Castle Leisure Centre tonight.

Brown, 27, has moved up a division to challenge for Rigby's lightweight crown; last year he lost to the super-featherweight champion Charles Shepherd.

Hockey

Kelleher kick-starts Slough

Pat Rowley

THE three clubs carrying English medal hopes in this weekend's European club competitions won well on the first day. Slough Ladies, seeking England's first gold in the premier women's event, the European Club Championship, were impressive 6-1 winners over the Russian club Donchanka Volgogradsk at Trent Park.

Reading, looking to help England back into the men's A division, defeated Vienna AC 6-2 at Brasschaat in Belgium while Teddington were

3-1 victors over Stroitel Brest in the European Cup Winners' Cup at Den Bosch.

England's only setback was in the women's Cup Winners' Cup at Leirven where a Highland side depleted by England youth team calls were given a 1-1 hiding by the Ukrainian club Dinamo Sumy.

Slough made hard work of the first half against Donchanka but Sarah Kelleher, their Irish international, ensured they turned round two goals to the good. She dominated the midfield and scored Slough's first goal with a crisp corner shot. Slough's second, a left post touch-in by

Julia Robertson, came after an intricate corner drill.

Once Slough started to move the ball quickly, the Russian defence buckled, handicapped by an injury to their defender Natalia Kravchenko as Kelleher scored her second corner goal.

Three more Slough goals, by Sue MacDonald, Karen Brown and Jane Smith, followed in 10 minutes before they presented Elena Poloykova with a consolation goal.

Slough's first real test comes tomorrow when they meet the former champions HGC of The Hague, 7-0 winners over Lorient of Italy.

Ice Hockey

Tait called up for active service in Slovenia

Vic Batchelder

ASHLEY TAIT of the Kingston Hawks was yesterday summoned to Great Britain's three-day training camp in Milton Keynes where they are preparing for next week's World Championship Pool B tournament in Slovenia.

Tait, 22, takes the place of Sheffield Steelers' 39-year-old Tim Cranston, who was unable

to confirm his fitness after injuring an arm during last month's Superleague play-off.

The 23-man squad-head for Slovenia on Monday in readiness for their opening game, against Ukraine in Jesenice on Wednesday.

Tait, who left Nottingham for Kingston in September, was the club's second-top scorer with 53 goals in 55 games last season. "He has plenty to offer the team," said

Peter Woods, the Britain coach. "It is [also] a step in the right direction age-wise."

Ten of the squad are aged 30 or more while three are younger than Tait who, after Guildford's Paul Thompson, becomes the second player from a British National League team to get the call.

Britain are also due to play Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and the host country.

Pride looks a Prize bet at Kempton

Ron Cox

BRIDIE'S PRIDE, who can be backed at 33-1 with Hill's and Coral this morning, can repay each-way support off bottom weight in the Milcars Easter Handicap at Kempton today.

The two miles will take some getting in the testing ground and the front-running Bridie's Pride, who is only 16's with Ladbrokes, has stamina in abundance.

It is, admittedly, a gamble that trainer Gerald Ham has Bridie's Pride back to last season's midsummer form, but that is a risk worth taking at the odds.

Bridie's Pride will be fitter for a run on the all-weather last week, which was only his second outing since he won over two and a quarter miles at Chesham last July.

The seven-year-old had the rest of his field well strung out that day, and had previously finished 17 lengths clear of the third horse when running the useful Media Star to seven lengths over the same course and distance.

This represents a step up in class for Bridie's Pride (4.45), but he also ran well in better grade last term when fifth behind Bolivar at Ascot and sixth to Shining Dancer at Kempton — on ground faster than he has.

Keen Dancer has to be rated a danger, even though he never ran over farther than a mile and a quarter when trained by Michael Bell last season. In true Martin Pipe fashion, he stayed on strongly to win over hurdles at Newbury last month and could not be better.

Masha-II (3.10), well fancied to make a winning reap-

pearance at Doncaster last month, is worth another chance in the six-furlong Milcars Easter Handicap.

John Gosden's colt led, going well, two furlongs out only to run out of gas in the closing stages when fourth to Julie's Jewel over seven furlongs. He looks a sprinter and is proven on soft ground.

Low to middle numbers should hold sway in this 19-runner event and Masha-II looks reasonably placed in answer to the reverse for backing him to reverse for cast combinations with Mrs Malaprop (drawn two) and Magic Rainbow (nine).

Chester House, one of Henry Cecil's 2,000 Guineas entries, seems sure to start a warm favourite for the Milcars Easter Stakes. He is the pick on juvenile form, but has yet to encounter ground as soft as this whereas Gurkha (4.15) hacked up by nine lengths in similar conditions at York in September.

He is also in the Guineas, and when you consider that his trainer Richard Hammon has won this race five times in the last six years, Gurkha looks more and more a good answer to the favourite.

The Milcars Easter Stakes for fillies features four 1,000 Guineas entries. Another Fantasy, Dazilyn Lady, Forum and Jay Gee.

Alharir (3.45) is evidently regarded as one of John Dunlop's lesser lights, but the stable has made an excellent start to the season with their three-year-olds and this daughter of Zafonic may be good enough today.

She looked fit at ease on a fast surface when fifth in the Mid-Night Line in the May Hill Stakes at Doncaster and is thought likely to appreciate some cut in the ground.

King-size clue from Webber

PAUL WEBBER is finishing the jumps season in better form than he started it, and the Banbury trainer can make the long journey to Carlisle pay with Credo in King in today's Carlisle Handicap Chase, writes Ron Cox.

A successful ex-Irish point-to-pointer, Credo is King (3.15) took on some of the best staying novices in the country last season and he has dropped to a favourable handicap mark following two below-par efforts this time.

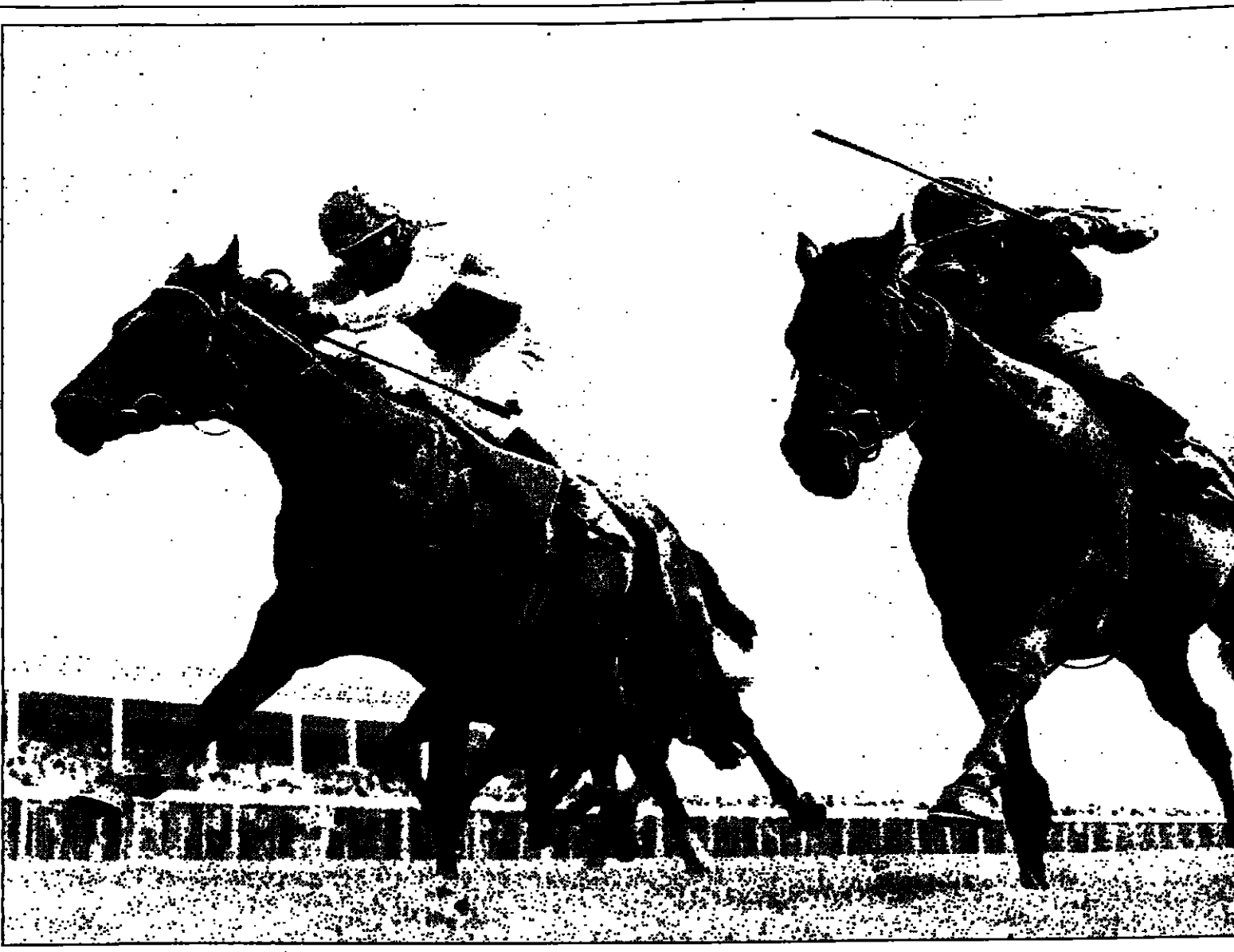
St Mellion Fairway's fourth placing in last week's Grand National was further proof that the Webber stable is back in form, and Credo is King

can leave his latest efforts well behind.

Ingletouan (4.20), whose handicap rating over fences is still a lot lower than his best hurdles mark, looks the answer to the Sunday Car Chase, writes Ron Cox.

He seemed to lose his way after beating Prince Of Saints here in December, but bounced back with a good second to Don'tevenhesitate at Kelso. Raised just 3lb for that run, Brian Macfarlane's nine-year-old can show how useful he is in this sort of company.

Best short-priced favourite on the card looks to be Tom Tate's The Snow Burn (2.45) following his short-head second to Orange Imp in a large field at Hexham.



Hot shot... Henry Cecil's Chester House (left) will be a warm favourite for the Milcars Easter Stakes at Kempton today

PHOTOGRAPH MARTIN LYNCH

Hope springs eternal for Balding

Chris Hawkins talks to the brilliant Mill Reef's trainer about the Classic hopefuls he unleashes over the next seven days

IN Balding's topical claim to fame is that he got three pairs and a birdie at Augusta when he played there last autumn; not perhaps matter, but an understandable cause of satisfaction.

Balding, 59, has been a more than useful rugger player, skier, rider and golfer during a life in which sport has always been a great love but in racing, of course, his name will always be synonymous with Mill Reef.

It was early in his training career that he was fortunate to train this great horse. The long search for another of similar stature has predictably proved unrewarding and Balding may eventually have to settle for memories of those wonderful times.

But in racing there is always hope. Every spring brings its new batch of two-year-olds and the expectation that among the three-

year-olds there might be one at least up to Classic standard.

This season Balding has four colts bordering on that level and is optimistic that Scorned can set the ball rolling when he attempts to follow up his seasonal reappearance victory at Doncaster in the Milcars Conditions Stakes at Kempton this afternoon.

"Scorned won't mind the soft ground," said the trainer. "He's a nice, big horse — an improving type. He had two runs last season and was behind Border Arrow at Newmarket before winning a maiden at Doncaster despite hanging and running green."

"He's not got any English Classic engagements but could improve enough to go for something abroad."

Merlin's Ring, who runs in the Greenham Stakes at Newbury next Saturday, is one of Balding's favourites. "He's probably not up to

most last season was Border Arrow who won the 22-runner Chesterton Maiden Stakes at Newmarket at 33-1 but in the style of a very smart animal.

"You wouldn't know he was a good horse at home. He hadn't worked well before Newmarket and to be honest I was a bit embarrassed by his appearance in the paddock that day. But he won't know more after he's run in either the Fellen Stakes or the Craven at Newmarket next week."

"He's owned by Bob Michaelson and Wafic Said, the men behind Sagitta the Guineas sponsor, and I know they would like him to run in the 2,000. I think he'll stay at least a mile and a quarter."

Another likely stable runner at Newmarket next week is Trans Island who goes for the Free Handicap according to his trainer.



Balding... keen on Scorned

Easter fixtures hit by heavy rain

Tony Paley

THERE are only three race meetings in Britain today following the abandonment of Haydock and Plumpton yesterday morning. Newton Abbot and Worcester have already been cancelled owing to waterlogging.

Monday's 15-fixture programme could also be severely hit. Hereford and Worcester are almost sure to be called off while Nottingham, Hereford, Warwick and Plumpton, where they are to try again, are all under threat.

Hugo Bevan, clerk of the course at both Hereford and Worcester, has called an inspection of both tracks this morning but does not hold out much hope for either.

Nottingham clerk of the course Charlie Moore reported yesterday: "We have had an inch of rain and we couldn't have raced today. Prospects depend on how much more rain we get and when the rain stops."

It is a similar story at Hereford and Warwick but both those courses, unlike Nottingham where no inspection is planned at present, will take a look early this morning. Plumpton will inspect at 3pm this afternoon.

Hopes are higher for Market Rasen and Fakenham where no problems are reported.

Britain was left with four runners in Monday's Jameson Irish Grand National at Fairyhouse following the final declarations yesterday.

The David Nicholson-trained Call A Day, 14-1 with Ladbrokes and due to be ridden by Charlie Smith, heads the quartet in a field of 23 declared for the IR£25,000 event.

He is just 2lb off top-weight on 11st 12lb, with Dai Williams's 20-1 chance Hermes Harvest (Seamus Durack) carrying 12lb, Kim Bailey's 7-1 shot Druid's Dream (Andrew Thornton) on 10st 8lb and Henrietta Knight's 50-1 outsider Full Of Oats (Terry Mitchell) on 10st.

Following the abandonment of today's Haydock meeting, the feature Tote Field March Stakes has been moved to Newmarket on Thursday with trainers having until noon on Monday to enter horses in the five-furlong Listed event for three-year-olds.

Rod Millman confirmed yesterday that leading candidate Lord Kintyre will run in the rescheduled race.

Kempton Jackpot programme

RON COX	TOP FORM
2.05 Ingletouan	Scorned
2.40 Masha-II	Masha-II
3.10 Masha-II	Masha-II
4.15 Masha-II	Masha-II
4.20 Masha-II	Masha-II
4.25 Masha-II	Masha-II
4.30 Masha-II	Masha-II
4.35 Masha-II	Masha-II
4.40 Masha-II	Masha-II
4.45 Masha-II	Masha-II

Virtually flat, right-handed, undulating course of 1m5f with separate 13m Jubilee Course. Straight 8.

Going: Soft. Don't blink. Top form rated.

Drainage: Low numbers best over 5f and 6f.

Long distance runners: High Carry (3.10) N. Thirsk, N. Yorks, 220 miles.

Seven day winners: None.

Blindfolded or veiled first time: None.

Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. J.Jumps.

2.05 E.F.F. MILCARS WATERFORD MAIDEN STAKES 2YO	CH4
101 (7) 2.05 Ingletouan (14) 3-0	101 (7) 2.05 Ingletouan (14) 3-0
102 (8) 2.10 Masha-II (15) 3-0	102 (8) 2.10 Masha-II (15) 3-0
103 (9) 2.15 Masha-II (16) 3-0	103 (9) 2.15 Masha-II (16) 3-0
104 (10) 2.20 Masha-II (17) 3-0	104 (10) 2.20 Masha-II (17) 3-0
105 (11) 2.25 Masha-II (18) 3-0	105 (11) 2.25 Masha-II (18) 3-0
106 (12) 2.30 Masha-II (19) 3-0	106 (12) 2.30 Masha-II (19) 3-0
107 (13) 2.35 Masha-II (20) 3-0	107 (13) 2.35 Masha-II (20) 3-0
108 (14) 2.40 Masha-II (21) 3-0	108 (14) 2.40 Masha-II (21) 3-0
109 (15) 2.45 Masha-II (22) 3-0	109 (15) 2.45 Masha-II (22) 3-0
110 (16) 2.50 Masha-II (23) 3-0	110 (16) 2.50 Masha-II (23) 3-0

2.40 MILCARS STANMORE CONDITIONS STAKES 3YO

1m 2f 54.832 (4 declared)

201 (1) 2.40 Masha-II (14) 3-0

202 (2) 2.45 Masha-II (15) 3-0

203 (3) 2.50 Masha-II (16) 3-0

204 (4) 2.55 Masha-II (17) 3-0

205 (5) 3.00 Masha-II (18) 3-0

206 (6) 3.05 Masha-II (19) 3-0

207 (7) 3.10 Masha-II (20) 3-0

208 (8) 3.15 Masha-II (21) 3-0

209 (9) 3.20 Masha-II (22) 3-0

210 (10) 3.25 Masha-II (23) 3-0

3.10 MILCARS RUSLIP HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
301 (1) 3.10 Masha-II (14) 3-0	301 (1) 3.10 Masha-II (14) 3-0
302 (2) 3.15 Masha-II (15) 3-0	302 (2) 3.15 Masha-II (15) 3-0
303 (3) 3.20 Masha-II (16) 3-0	303 (3) 3.20 Masha-II (16) 3-0
304 (4) 3.25 Masha-II (17) 3-0	304 (4) 3.25 Masha-II (17) 3-0
305 (5) 3.30 Masha-II (18) 3-0	305 (5) 3.30 Masha-II (18) 3-0
306 (6) 3.35 Masha-II (19) 3-0	306 (6) 3.35 Masha-II (19) 3-0
307 (7) 3.40 Masha-II (20) 3-0	307 (7) 3.40 Masha-II (20) 3-0
308 (8) 3.45 Masha-II (21) 3-0	308 (8) 3.45 Masha-II (21) 3-0
309 (9) 3.50 Masha-II (22) 3-0	309 (9) 3.50 Masha-II (22) 3-0
310 (10) 3.55 Masha-II (23) 3-0	310 (10) 3.55 Masha-II (23) 3-0

3.45 MILCARS MASAKA STAKES 3YO	CH4
401 (1) 3.45 Masha-II (14) 3-0	401 (1) 3.45 Masha-II (14) 3-0
402 (2) 3.50 Masha-II (15) 3-0	402 (2) 3.50 Masha-II (15) 3-0
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408 (8) 4.20 Masha-II (21) 3-0	408 (8) 4.20 Masha-II (21) 3-0
409 (9) 4.25 Masha-II (22) 3-0	409 (9) 4.25 Masha-II (22) 3-0
410 (10) 4.30 Masha-II (23) 3-0	410 (10) 4.30 Masha-II (23) 3-0

4.15 MILCARS EASTER STAKES 3YO	CH4
501 (1) 4.15 Masha-II (14) 3-0	501 (1) 4.15 Masha-II (14) 3-0
502 (2) 4.20 Masha-II (15) 3-0	502 (2) 4.20 Masha-II (15) 3-0
503 (3) 4.25 Masha-II (16) 3-0	503 (3) 4.25 Masha-II (16) 3-0
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505 (5) 4.35 Masha-II (18) 3-0	505 (5) 4.35 Masha-II (18) 3-0
506 (6) 4.40 Masha-II (19) 3-0	506 (6) 4.40 Masha-II (19) 3-0
507 (7) 4.45 Masha-II (20) 3-0	507 (7) 4.45 Masha-II (20) 3-0
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510 (10) 5.00 Masha-II (23) 3-0	510 (10) 5.00 Masha-II (23) 3-0

4.45 MILCARS QUEEN'S PRIZE HANDICAP	CH4
601 (1) 4.45 Masha-II (14) 3-0	601 (1) 4.45 Masha-II (14) 3-0
602 (2) 4.50 Masha-II (15) 3-0	602 (2) 4.50 Masha-II (15) 3-0
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609 (9) 5.25 Masha-II (22) 3-0	609 (9) 5.25 Masha-II (22) 3-0
610 (10) 5.30 Masha-II (23) 3-0	610 (10) 5.30 Masha-II (23) 3-0

5.20 MILCARS TEMPLE FORTUNE HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
701 (1) 5.20 Masha-II (14) 3-0	701 (1) 5.20 Masha-II (14) 3-0
702 (2) 5.25 Masha-II (15) 3-0	702 (2) 5.25 Masha-II (15) 3-0
703 (3) 5.30 Masha-II (16) 3-0	703 (3) 5.30 Masha-II (16) 3-0
704 (4) 5.35 Masha-II (17) 3-0	704 (4) 5.35 Masha-II (17) 3-0
705 (5) 5.40 Masha-II (18) 3-0	705 (5) 5.40 Masha-II (18) 3-0
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710 (10) 6.05 Masha-II (23) 3-0	710 (10) 6.05 Masha-II (23) 3-0

5.50 MILCARS TEMPLE FORTUNE HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
801 (1) 5.50 Masha-II (14) 3-0	801 (1) 5.50 Masha-II (14) 3-0
802 (2) 5.55 Masha-II (15) 3-0	802 (2) 5.55 Masha-II (15) 3-0
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810 (10) 6.35 Masha-II (23) 3-0	810 (10) 6.35 Masha-II (23) 3-0

6.15 MILCARS TEMPLE FORTUNE HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
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902 (2) 6.20 Masha-II (15) 3-0	902 (2) 6.20 Masha-II (15) 3-0
903 (3) 6.25 Masha-II (16) 3-0	903 (3) 6.25 Masha-II (16) 3-0
904 (4) 6.30 Masha-II (17) 3-0	904 (4) 6.30 Masha-II (17) 3-0
905 (5) 6.35 Masha-II (18) 3-0	905 (5) 6.35 Masha-II (18) 3-0
906 (6) 6.40 Masha-II (19) 3-0	906 (6) 6.40 Masha-II (19) 3-0
907 (7) 6.45 Masha-II (20) 3-0	907 (7) 6.45 Masha-II (20) 3-0
908 (8) 6.50 Masha-II (21) 3-0	908 (8) 6.50 Masha-II (21) 3-0
909 (9) 6.55 Masha-II (22) 3-0	909 (9) 6.55 Masha-II (22) 3-0
910 (10) 7.00 Masha-II (23) 3-0	910 (10) 7.00 Masha-II (23) 3-0

6.45 MILCARS TEMPLE FORTUNE HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
1001 (1) 6.45 Masha-II (14) 3-0	1001 (1) 6.45 Masha-II (14) 3-0
1002 (2) 6.50 Masha-II (15) 3-0	1002 (2) 6.50 Masha-II (15) 3-0
1003 (3) 6.55 Masha-II (16) 3-0	1003 (3) 6.55 Masha-II (16) 3-0
1004 (4) 7.00 Masha-II (17) 3-0	1004 (4) 7.00 Masha-II (17) 3-0
1005 (5) 7.05 Masha-II (18) 3-0	1005 (5) 7.05 Masha-II (18) 3-0
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7.55 MILCARS TEMPLE FORTUNE HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
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Carlisle (N.H.) with form guide

RON COX	TOP FORM
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Rugby Union

Premiership One: Bath 13 Saracens 29

Lynagh lines up double chance

Robert Armstrong

SARACENS showed the indomitable character of potential champions with a gut-wrenching performance that brought them their first victory at the Recreation Ground and kept the heat on Newcastle, still the Premiership leaders, on scoring difference.

Raw courage in defence and a predatory instinct in attack enabled the London side to see off the challenge of a committed Bath who ultimately failed to turn their pressure into scores.

Again, Michael Lynagh, the Saracens fly-half, exercised a massive influence, giving his side much-needed breathing space with accurate tactical kicking as well as scoring 19 points with five penalties and two conversions. Leadership by example was also the hallmark of Francois Pienaar's display: his non-stop support running gave the South African flanker a merited opportunity to plunder a critical second-half try.

"We had to win to set us up for a huge match against Newcastle next weekend for which we have already sold 16,500 tickets," said Mark Evans, Saracens' director of rugby. "We did what Bath have done for a lot of years — absorbed a great deal of pressure and then killed them off in the final quarter. You bet your life on Lynagh's kicking. A league and cup double remains a possibility."

Bath ought to have built a commanding lead before half-time yet, so determined were Saracens to stop Bath whenever their line came under siege, that it was the London side who turned around 13-10 in front. The referee Chris White also played a significant role, ruling out possible tries by Bath for previous infringements after Iwan Evans and Jon Callard crossed the line.

Bath owed their forward dominance to a splendid multi-skilled performance by Nigel Redman, particularly in the loose where his deft handling and close support of the backs put Saracens under pressure. Bath's back-row forwards Eric Peters and Russell Earnshaw made their mark, too, with strong driv-



Dead end for Diprose... the Saracens forward is held up by Earnshaw's tackle at the Recreation Ground

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID ROGERS

ing and rucking which tended to open up fresh attacking options down the flanks.

However, in the opening quarter Bath had only a solitary penalty by Callard, for offside, to show and even that score was quickly neutralised by Lynagh, who chipped over a 25-metre penalty for barging in the line-out. Bath forged ahead again after 21 minutes when Redman sent Jeremy Guscott harrying through the middle and Adeyado Adeyado followed up to score at the

posts. But Lynagh again reduced the deficit with a short-range penalty.

On the stroke of half-time Saracens shocked Bath with an extraordinary try by Richard Johnson stormed through mid-field and unloaded to Wallace, the Irish wing seemed boxed in by the left touchline. Yet bewildering shimmies and sidesteps took him past three defenders and across the line.

Soon after the break Callard brought the scores level

at 13-13 with a short penalty for offside and again Bath besieged the Saracens' line with rucks and mauls that looked certain to produce reward.

Saracens, though, were in no mood to fall behind a third time, throwing their bodies into Bath's path whenever their pack threatened to surge across the line.

The turning point came just past the hour when a blunder by Guscott in front of his own posts effectively cost Bath the match. A chip and charge by

Kyran Bracken from 40 metres seemed to have left the Bath centre with ample time to hack the ball clear but he lost his footing close to the line and Pienaar took advantage, brushing past Adeyado to touch down.

To make matters worse, when Bath were awarded a couple of kickable penalties, Callard unaccountably lost his line and length. In contrast Lynagh persevered in productive vein. The cool Australian sealed a momentous victory

with three further penalties in the final quarter-hour. Saracens' intentions were never in doubt: tough on errors, tough on Bath.

SCORES: Bath: Try: Adeyado. Conversion: Callard. Penalties: Callard 2. Saracens: Try: Pienaar. Conversion: Lynagh 2. Penalties: Lynagh 5. Bath: Callard: Evans, de Gier, Wallace, Guscott, Adeyado, Perry, Nicol (capt), Hilton, Hogg, O'Leary, Haig, Redman, Ravenscroft, P. Wallace, M. Lynagh, K. Bracken, Grass, Chesser, P. Wallace, John, Greenwood, Sturman, Pienaar, Diprose (capt). Referee: C. White (Gloucester).

Richmond 43 Bristol 3

Torrent of tries unleashed by Chapman

Robert Kitson

BY THE time Craig Quinell and Dominic Chapman are finished this season, better sides than Bristol will have been left trailing in their wake. Yesterday's watery exhibition at the Athletic Ground was dominated by a spectacular second-half thunderstorm and Bath, due to follow on Easter Monday, must pray lightning does not strike twice in every sense.

Even before the skies darkened, the Richmond duo had lit up the afternoon with their try-scoring instincts and shared five tries between them inside an hour before, with the pitch ankle-deep in places, both teams spent a splashy happy latter term locating the shallow end.

Quinell scored two tries in a manner which again called into question his exclusion from the Welsh national team, while Chapman enhanced his growing reputation with a hat-trick of scores in 16 minutes either side of the interval. It took his league tally to 11 this season and the Irish selectors will forever rue the day that he opted for England A.

For Bristol, who have spent the season treading water at the bottom of the league, the first try arrived via an immaculately worked line-out play close to the line. Williams' pinpoint throw found the soaring Craig Giller, who caught the ball two-handed and returned it instantly to his hooker. An equally well-timed inside pass to the charging Quinell yielded five richly deserved points.

Bateman, despite a hint of a knock-on earlier in the move, maintained the Welsh theme with a close-range second, which was converted by Adrian Davies before Quinell drove his way over again from a line-

out catch by Ben Clark. Bristol's response had been a solitary penalty by Paul Hull and they had no answer to the marauding Chapman.

His first arrived in injury-time at the interval, Matt Pini's excellent break 70 metres out allowing the 22-year-old former English Colt to skip over unopposed. His partner-in-crime Spencer Brown showed pace to put Richmond 31-3 ahead just 36 seconds into the second half and, with the rain hammering down, Bristol's commitment understandably began to ebb away.

They could have done without Chapman cruising like a miniature hydrofoil around four desperate defenders down the left touchline in the 51st minute in a wonderful individual effort which covered 70 metres. To prove it was no fluke, he left two more opponents surfing the touchline behind him six minutes later. If it was Bristol's eighth successive league defeat — a club record.

Early-season inconsistency means the best Richmond can hope for is a respectable respectability but, with Scott Quinell available after suspension for Bath's visit, there are a few more psychological points to be scored.

Their director of rugby John Kingston could be seen before kick-off jabbing the pitch with his umbrella in an attempt to drain the surface; if his side can extend their excellent late-season form, he will be entitled to do the same to his critics.

SCORES: Richmond: Try: C. Quinell 2. Bateman, Chapman 3. Brown. Conversion: A. Davies 4. Bristol: Pini. Williams, Giller, Clark, Bateman, Brown, Spencer, Brown, Williams (capt), Giller, Hogg, P. Wallace, M. Lynagh, K. Bracken, Grass, Chesser, P. Wallace, John, Greenwood, Sturman, Pienaar, Diprose (capt). Referee: S. Lander (Liverpool).

Premiership preview

Bates wants extra spark to ignite Newcastle

David Grix

NEWCASTLE will use today's long haul to Gloucester as a timely reminder that their Premiership title is not for the faint-hearted.

Although the leaders have won 14 of their 15 league games this season, their coach Steve Bates was concerned that, on the evidence of Gloucester's performance over Wasp, a degree of staleness may have crept in.

"Every single game from here on in is going to be tough," said Bates, "and we have got to get the guys up mentally from what was a disappointing second-half display against Wasps."

"The players were annoyed and we must hope that facing Gloucester at Kingsholm will provide sufficient incentive. When you are at the top of the tree, everybody wants to know you off, and Gloucester are clearly no exception."

"On a dry and firm surface I think we would be quite confident of beating them. However, if it is boggy or windy, then that home advantage comes even more significant."

Fifth-placed Gloucester's prodigious home form has already sent Saracens and Leicester packing this season and a capacity 10,000-plus crowd is expected at arguably English club rugby's most intimidating arena.

Newcastle anticipate the return of their captain Dean Ryan (hand), the centre Vaisa Tuigamala (knee) and the hooker Ross Nesdale (ankle) for this vital match.

Northampton have called off their home fixture against London Irish on the advice of the police and fire brigade. The Franklins Gardens pitch is considered playable but the surrounding St James neighbourhood is flooded. Leicester, in fourth place, have all their England players back on duty for the trip to Sale but Wasps meet Harlequins at Loftus Road tomorrow.

Bath supporters have launched an appeal fund for their England prop Kevin Yates, banned for six months by the Rugby Football Union for biting the ear of the London Scottish flanker Simon Penn. Yates is considering a High Court appeal and money raised will contribute towards his legal costs.

Fidlers two and the people's Shed that unites fortress Kingsholm

Robert Kitson meets the father and son aiming to put Newcastle's Falcons to flight

THE last thing Newcastle's players will see as they trot out at Gloucester today is the small sign above the tunnel bearing the legend "This is Kingsholm". As with the Shaky era at Anfield, first-time visitors will not dismissively at such a blatant psychological ploy — until, that is, the game starts and they suddenly discover the effect the words have on 15 blokes opposite wearing the cherry and white.

Like going to the dentist, opponents troop down to Kingsholm once a year pretty well resigned to the drilling which awaits them. Gloucester may be toothless away but already this season Saracens, Leicester, Northampton and Wasps have suffered the time-honoured treatment. Unlike most dentists, though, the most dentists do not believe in anaesthetic or old copies of Country Life. This remains raw rugby territory, with its nerve centre in the Shed.

As Bob Fidler, joint editor of the fanzine Shedhead, knows: "It's like an elongated penis' toilet... unless the wind's in the wrong direction you don't get wet." Maybe, but this glorified dug-out contains more rugby fanatics per square foot than any other ground in the country. From them flow the precious ingredients which make Gloucester so formidable: rough humour, pride and bloody-mindedness.

Even Francois Pienaar, South Africa's World Cup-winning captain, calls it "The House of Pain" and, if Newcastle's high-flying Falcons are grounded this afternoon, they will merely be feeding a family legend. Since 1891 Gloucester sides have played 2,273 matches at Kingsholm, winning almost 80 per cent of them, and the majority in the past three decades have featured a Fidler in the second row.

In the Seventies and Eighties it was big John who ruled the roost; as team manager he now has the satisfaction of watching his 23-year-old son Rob climb the international ladder while simultaneously extending his Kingsholm legacy. Both agree the Shed is far from dead.

"We've now got the sons of the dads who were watching

me when I played back in the Seventies," reveals Fidler senior. "Generations go through there, they stand on their favourite spot and, when any of our lads run down there before kick-off, they just go bloody berserk. I don't think they have anyone, they're just staunch Gloucester supporters. If they can do anything to upset the opposition they'll do it. I definitely think they're worth between six and 10 points to us."

"When I was playing, there was always some big old wag in the crowd who used to shout Jump, Fidler at every line-out. He had to shout it for a long time because I didn't jump very often. It'd be 'Lift Fidler' now, wouldn't it?"

One still gets the occasional nostalgic blast of "Come on, Glaws, blow 'em how" but some Shed occupants have moved with the times. The arrival of the former French captain Philippe Saint-André prompted a rash of berets and onions, and the warm reception given other signings

such as the Samoan centre Terry Fanolua belies the odd complaint about alleged racial abuse.

"When I was a kid watching Dad play, my mum wouldn't let me into the Shed," admits the younger Fidler. "I just remember the cheering and the beeping, particularly the abuse the referee got." No change there, then.

The official they particularly love to hate is Tony Spreadbury who, to his credit, relishes it. He must do even to consider running over to the Shed, as did as a touch-judge four days after Gloucester have been trounced by Bath, and shouting "47-3. Great effort, lads!"

Back on this planet the bond between fans and the current team remains intense. "They're not just supporters," says Rob. "Every-one who comes down dreams of pulling on a cherry and white shirt, so you are literally playing for them." If your Dad's a local celebrity, though, gaining respect can be hard even for an England A regular. "All he says is: 'In my day we just used to beat them up.' I try to explain to him that in the modern

game, if the referee or linesman doesn't see it, television will. Had I been a ballet dancer it would have been his worst nightmare, apart from me playing for Bath. My options weren't really that wide."

The only thing that might one day rock Gloucester's sense of certainty is a move to another stadium. The plan, if funds allow, is to develop the current ground into a 15,000-seat stadium but losing the Shed would be like amputating a limb. "Richard Hill and I have already suggested we get a couple of helicopters and transport it around with us to away games," says Fidler senior.

Today, though, it is the Shed, the Shed, the Shed that needs to be shifted. "I was in the internationals' bar at Twickenham last week and Rob Andrew came in," said Fidler, who won the last of his four caps in 1984.

"He came over and asked me how the Shed was, so I told him I'd get it primed up for him. But we respect Newcastle. They're a very strong side. We're going to need help from the Shed, the army and just about everyone else."



Family affair... Rob Fidler and his father John, now team manager

CHRISTOPHER JONES

Swalec Cup quarter-finals

Garndiffaith drink it all in

Paul Rees on a giant-killing club whose success has been fuelled by pride and beer

PETER TUCKER, the secretary of the Welsh Cup giant-killers Garndiffaith, reflects on the new game of rugby. "It's about liquid assets," he said. "I suppose it always has been, but in my day the only liquidity they were interested in came from the brewery."

Garndiffaith, a small village which overlooks the Pontypool to Blaenavon road in Gwent, travel today to Seven Sisters, a hamlet to the North-east of Neath, for the quarter-finals of the Swalec Cup. As both teams are in the fourth division of the Welsh league, one will create history by becoming the first junior club to reach the last four of the competition.

"It's a cakes and ale match," said Tucker. "The players will be caked in mud after all the rain in the last week and the winning bonus for both sets of players will be a few pints of beer. That said, whoever gets into the semi-final will get at least £15,000 from the Welsh Rugby Union. We could hire Alan Shearer for a week."

Garndiffaith have been the Stevenage Borough of the Welsh Cup, epitomising the romance of knock-out competition by beating Premier Division Bridgend in December.

"Kingsley Jones [the Wales flanker and Ebbw Vale captain] was being interviewed on television the night before the match," said the Garndiffaith captain Scott Crosby. "He said that professionalism meant the days of giant-killing were over. I used that in my pre-match speech. I told the players that we were playing for something money could not buy — pride and each other."

"After the match, the Bridgend boys told us what they got for losing, which was £200. We had five pints each for winning, the chairman giving us an extra one to mark the occasion. You do not play for the Garm because you want money. You do it because you love rugby. The cup run has put us on the map — we have been deluged by the media and it has been a marvellous, eye-opening experience."

After Bridgend, First Division Rummy and Second Division Llanharan were toppled at Garndiffaith, whose previous 15 minutes of fame had come in 1977 when Car-

diff, Gerald Davies and Gareth Edwards included, had come to Llangarn View and were relieved to escape with a 9-0 success.

Tucker was the Garndiffaith captain and flanker that day. "I had a quiet word with Gareth. I told him that if he did not fancy a broken leg, he had better let go of the ball quickly. I know the referee will be the Seven Sisters match. Clayton Thomas. He was once an outside-half my elbow used to have a lot of contact with. I hope he remembers that."

"Our mistake against Cardiff was to push the boat out. We gave them chicken and chips and a belly load of beer. The profits were gone. We have learned our lesson. Bridgend had pie and beans."

Garndiffaith is a tough estate where unemployment is high. The uninsured rugby clubhouse was burned down in an arson attack last summer. The club have had to take security measures to protect their ground, which was presented to them 50 years ago by a group of dinner-ladies who organised fund-raisers to buy the land from the council.

Seven Sisters is a more rural setting and if Garndiffaith have enjoyed a walter of

media attention, Seven have arrived at history's threshold by stealth, barely announced.

"We do not begrudge them their fame," said the Seven Sisters secretary David Watts. "Their victory over Bridgend was a tonic for the Fourth Division. We have played them twice in the league, winning both games by a single score. There will not be much in it on Saturday. They have the track record. We have home advantage."

Garndiffaith plan to travel in style, leaving their ground in the middle of the morning. "We want to make a day of it," said Tucker. "We are going to go over the heads-of-the-valleys road, snow permitting, stopping in a hotel for a pre-match brunch, scrambled eggs on toast, a few mugs of coffee, something like that."

"We will mark the players' achievements by ordering them special drill tops. They will have something to remember this year by."

"Someone suggested having a dinner-dance for the squad but I asked him what the players would have to remember that by in years to come. Just a fuzzy memory and a thick head the following morning. Mind you, if we make the semi-finals it will be thick heads all round — a couple of pints over the eight. That's liquidity for you."

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TheGuardian INTERACTIVE

Football
Patrick Glenn

Gould's

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When unbeaten for 1700 six-pot
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Other

John M. ...

Football

Patrick Glenn on how the Englishman whose father manages Wales escaped from the confines of London to have a say in the destiny of the Scottish title

Gould's break gives Celtic security

HE BROKE out of Wandsworth and has never looked back. Now he savours freedom and has rewarded his new employers with a string of displays of such conviction that he has become an integral part of the Premier Division's meanest defence.

Jonathon Gould has repelled intruders so successfully that the Englishman whose father manages Wales has not only become a probable Scotland World Cup hero but a larger-than-life hero to Celtic fans waiting for their team's first league championship in 10 years.

The goalkeeper, of course, was not in prison when he escaped from that borough in south London; it just felt like it. He was a frustrated teenager working in a bank, yearning for a career in a game in which his father, Bobby, had attained distinction.

After taking A-levels, Gould joined the bank in his home town of Bristol and moved after a couple of years to what he believed would be a heady life in the City.

"It turned out to be Wandsworth High Street," said Gould. "Not entirely the glam life depicted in the movies and on telly. I told the bank I

wanted to work for the PR department, because that seemed much less tedious.

"But that was not on. It was stifling and I had to get out. I bolted and became a hydraulic engineer back in Bristol. But I was desperate to be a pro footballer and that is why I became a goalkeeper."

His father was manager of Wimbledon when the Crazy Gang beat Liverpool to win the FA Cup in 1988 and it was the intoxication of that experience that hardened his ambition.

Tomorrow's Old Firm showdown at Ibrox gives Gould a chance virtually to eliminate their fiercest rivals from contention, as victory would give them a six-point lead with four matches left.

Considering he was 22 before he played in goal as a professional, Gould, now 29, has done exceptionally well. It seems typical that he should flout convention; his journey even included 18 months in New Zealand playing semi-professional football.

"I realised I wouldn't make it as an outfield player," said Gould. "I decided to go in goal. My first brush with the professional game was at Derby County where Arthur Cox allowed me to stay six months to learn at the feet of the master, Peter Shilton.

"That was invaluable. But I also had four years at Coventry City with Steve Ogrizovic. I was fortunate in having the physique and the hands for the job, but learning quickly that eliminating errors is the most important aspect of this position is the key to the whole thing. I could hardly have had better tutors."

Gould had an unhappy 18 months at Bradford, where it quickly became clear that the manager, Chris Kamara, had no time for him. Having been in the Premiership with Coventry, the First and Second Division with Bradford as well as a spell in the Third Division at Halifax, Gould had played in all of the English divisions.

"I thought that would be a recommendation to anybody looking for a goalkeeper when Chris Kamara let me know I could go for free. He didn't fancy me but made it personal and when that happens it affects your confidence."

When Stewart Kerr was injured at the start of this season Celtic's need for a back-up goalkeeper became evident. Jock Brown, the club's general manager, checked Gould's suitability with his brother, Craig, the Scotland coach, and Celtic's assistant manager Murdo MacLeod.

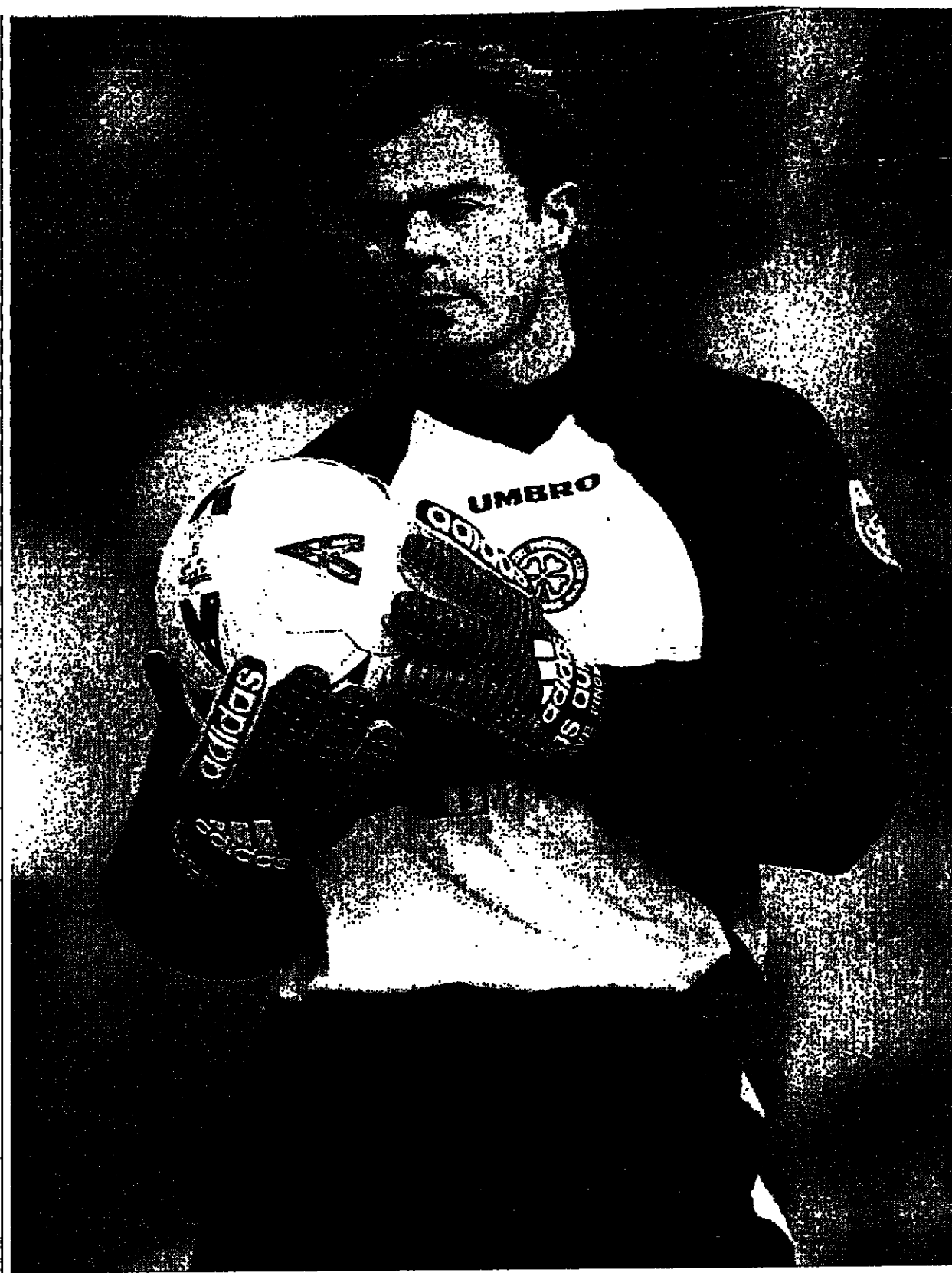
Gould qualified for Scotland through his grandmother and Brown and MacLeod had worked with the goalkeeper at international get-togethers.

"Murdo and Craig gave me the nod and that was it," said Gould, who soon became first choice. "I had an idea that Celtic were a big club but, until you walk into this place, you can't realise that it's awesome."

"It is not just habit and generations of inheritance that cause so many people to come here. It's the way the team play the game. They've been playing good football here for over a century and, no matter how the personnel changes, that basic adherence to the old policy doesn't change."

"We have a Dutch coach, Wim Jansen, and many foreign players but it is still Celtic, still trying to play entertaining, successful football. We have a great chance of winning the league and we go into this Rangers game full of confidence."

"Despite losing to Rangers in the Scottish Cup last Sunday, we know we outplayed them for an hour. We can do that again and the goals will come. There is a lot of conviction here."



In safe hands... Celtic's Jonathon Gould is held in high esteem north of the border

Jansen upbeat for Ibrox six-pointer but Hearts keep a watching brief

CELTIC'S confidence before tomorrow's Old Firm match at Ibrox seems strange for a team who were defeated 2-1 by their fiercest rivals in the Scottish Cup semi-finals only a week ago, writes Patrick Glenn.

Despite injuries to important players, there was an unmistakable bounce about the head coach Wim Jansen yesterday.

With a three-point lead in the Premier Division a win or a draw would be perfectly acceptable. For Rangers, victory appears to be the only option. To drop six points behind with only four matches remaining would surely leave the defending champions in an irretrievable position.

Jansen even seemed sanguine about the injuries that prevented the defenders Tom Boyd and Enrico Annunzi and the midfielder Morten Wieghorst from training. "We will see what

tomorrow brings, but we are hopeful," said the Dutchman. The midfielder Jackie McNamara, missing from the last three matches, has fully recovered.

Rangers manager Walter Smith, who has lost his central defender Gordon Petric to injury, will play the Italian Lorenzo Amoruso from the start.

Hearts, four points adrift of Celtic, may have taken a back-seat role of late but recognise that victory over Hibernian in today's Edinburgh derby could prove significant.

"We might be talking in a fortnight's time and saying how Celtic or Rangers have slipped up," said their manager Jim Jefferies. "There is still a lot to play for yet. It just means we have got to go to Easter Road and win. If Rangers were then to win on Sunday, it would make things very interesting in the weeks ahead."

A N Other

THIS studious son of Loches recently returned to the nation's attention in charge of some crooked steeplechase but as a player he was better known for a combination of prodigious heading ability and astute touches on the ground. For four years, just off the high road, he

averaged a goal every other game. Then he went wool-gathering without quite recapturing a similar scoring touch, although injuries had something to do with this.

Last week: David McCreery (Manchester Utd, Queens Park Rangers, Tulsa Roughnecks, Newcastle Utd, Hearts, Hartlepool Utd, Carlisle Utd, Hartlepool Utd).

First Division: Charlton Athletic 3 Reading 0

From hard times to great expectations

Trevor Haylett

ALAN CURBISHLEY said in his programme notes that it was time to leave behind the weeds, Portakabins, talk of a Selhurst Park Ground share and a once run-down Valley. Only the colour of their shirts connects Charlton to the club who endured such hard times at the start of the 1990s.

"Let's get talking about what a good squad we are and how well we're playing," said the Charlton manager, though the supporters surely need no prompting for that. Three goals yesterday was another lucid statement from a side now threatening Sunderland's hold on second place.

Barring an unthinkable series of results, Charlton's ticket to the play-off lottery is assured. They are looking beyond that and rightly so. With three fixtures against bottom-side sides in their four-game

finale, the outlook is distinctly promising.

For long phases, the division's bottom-but-one team gave them a game but in the penalty areas, one stood head and shoulders above the other. Having fallen behind after five minutes, Reading found it hard to see a way back.

They gave it a real go at the start of the second half, and with a touch more composure and awareness, the visitors would have achieved more for their new manager Tommy Burns.

By then, however, Paul Mortimer had put them two goals behind, curling around the defensive wall a free-kick Reading felt should not have been awarded.

Cive Mendonca has scored a variety of ways this season but surely never before has one come direct from his own goalkeeper.

Sasa Ilic's huge punt sailed over the top of Steve Jones

and two Reading markers and landed with Mendonca, who prodded home his 22nd of the season to open the scoring in the sixth minute.

Ilic then performed heroics to safeguard that early lead, smothering at Jimmy Crawford's feet after a neat exchange with Robert Fleck. His double stop late on from James Lambert and Michael O'Neill was equally impressive if no longer so crucial. Mark Bright having just headed a third two minutes after coming on.

A fifth successive win means Charlton are enjoying their best run for seven years. "We're on a roll but I still think we have to win all our remaining games for an automatic place," Curbishley said.

Charlton Athletic (4-4-7) Ilic; Mills; Bates; Youds; Barnes; Newton; K. Jones; Kneale (Brown 81m); Mortimer (Sheedy 75); Mendonca; S. Jones (Bright 73); Reading (2-4-2) Howie; Bernal; Parkinson; Gray; Legg; Lambert; Frost (Morty 77) McInrye (Brayson 46); Redmond; M. Pierce (Parsmouth).

Premiership preview

Wenger focused on final countdown

Russell Thomas

ARSENAL'S immovable object meets Newcastle's less-than-irresistible force but Arsene Wenger's eyes are not yet gleaming behind those glasses. Double vision can wait; the Frenchman is strictly focused on the Premiership and the chance to cut Manchester United's lead to four points.

Even if Lee Dixon and Martin Keown are not part of the Arsenal back four today, Highbury should have even higher expectation at tea-time. After all, the Premiership's second-best defence should neutralise its second-worst attack, Alan Shearer or no, and the home attack prevail at the other end.

This FA Cup final preview has been deprived of the attraction of Alan Shearer, last year's Players' Player of the Year, confronting the new holder of the crown, Dennis Bergkamp, through the Dutchman's suspension.

Newcastle, as Philippe Al-

bert points out, still have one of the better defences. But Wenger says his are simply the best. Steve Bould should continue seamlessly as Keown's replacement with the Premiership record and set a new club mark.

The last team to score a league goal against Arsenal were Coventry on January 17. Since then, they have gone eight games, a Premiership record, without conceding. If they make it nine, they will also better an Arsenal sequence standing since 1993.

Wenger is aware of Newcastle's resurgence of pride after their semi-final win last Sunday. He insists Kenny Dalglish's team will have a relegation-free summer. As for their meeting on May 16, Wembley meeting on May 16, as far as Wenger is concerned, that could be "two years away" so focused is he on the immediate challenge. And, whatever today's outcome, he says Newcastle face only a "small threat" of going down.

If only Christian Gross could be so sure. He takes his Tottenham team to Chelsea burning with desire to avenge the worst defeat of his coaching career and Spurs' biggest home drubbing for 63 years.

Chelsea's focus on next Thursday's European return with Vicenza should help Tottenham's attempt to avenge that 5-1 defeat in December, even if Gianluca Vialli insists this is not "just a practice match" for his team, which awaits yet more alteration after the player-manager made eight changes at Leeds. Chelsea have not lost to Spurs for eight years.

Across London, Harry Redknapp recalls Eyal Berkovic as West Ham confront their fellow Uefa Cup pursuers Derby in what promises to be one of the most open games of the day. But Everton, even with Duncan Ferguson leading from the front again, can expect few luxuries from George Graham's Leeds, nursing their own European aspirations.

Home defeats for Crystal Palace, Barnsley and Bolton will effectively signal relegation for the London club and even gloomier writing on the wall for the northern pair.

Change of strip: Fulham go Green

Football Diary

Martin Thorpe

GIVEN the amount of money Fulham are burning in their quest for Premiership football, the following tale may come as no surprise.

For the Second Division club are encouraging supporters to sponsor trees planting to help mop up the excess carbon dioxide the atmosphere.

We did you not. In an attempt to become "the world's first carbon-neutral football club", Fulham have teamed up with the Environmental Task Force with the aim of planting more trees around Fulham as well as planting a whole forest shaped to spell the letters FFC under the flight path into Gatwick airport.

"The more trees planted, the bigger the logo," says the club in Tuesday night's match programme against Walsall.

So seriously are Fulham FC taking the project that they have even commissioned "a carbon audit to work out how many trees need to be planted each year to soak up the CO2 released into the atmosphere by the club's and supporters' activities".

But while Fulham are determined to show an environmentally friendly face, their fans are still prone to emitting large amounts of cynicism.

Andrew Price of Harrow writes to ask if Fulham's forest will compensate for: i) all the hot air that comes from the manager's office? ii) all the resources spent on a multi-million pound team that cannot even beat Walsall at home? iii) all the forests felled for the banknotes needed to pay Kevin Keegan's salary?

YOU can expect many things if Charlton win promotion to the Premiership, but do not bank on an increase in the culture level. The Robins' defender Stuart Palmer, speaking exclusively to the match programme, lists as his worst habits: "Picking my nose, chewing my nails and scratching my groin." And, as for his away-game roommate Steve Brown, Palmer reveals: "He picks his toenails and then scratches them. Definitely a case of foot in mouth."

OKAY, Les Ferdinand might well be justified in his criticism of Gerald Ashby's refereeing, and he may well think it unfair to be fined £2,500. But let us put this into perspective. The Spurs striker earns £20,000 a week, which equates to someone earning £20,000 a year being done for 50 quid. Hardly cause for an instalment book.

GET a grip, ref. Lazio's Argentinean international Jose Antonio Chamot has just been given a one-match ban by the Serie A disciplinary commission for directing a hand gesture at the referee.

Chamot was protesting against two controversial decisions by the official Pierluigi Collina in last Sunday's crucial league match against Juventus.

So what was this hand gesture? Two fingers, one finger, finger and thumb? No. As the disciplinary commission statement explained: "At the end of the game Chamot expressed his evident dissent with the referee with an overly firm handshake".

THE coach of the Brazilian club Palmeiras, Luis Felipe Scolari, has come up with a novel way of improving his team's performances. "We can't just sit and watch our opponents play," he said. "Palmeiras need to commit more fouls."

This tactical innovation, which is designed to stop the flood of goals that second-placed Palmeiras have been conceding lately, is just the latest addition to Scolari's "no-frills" football philosophy.

This has brought him much success. However, in last year's championship final against Vasco da Gama, Palmeiras committed 40 fouls and Scolari was sent off for tangling with a Vasco player on the touchline.

"I want to make it clear that I'm not encouraging violence," said Scolari this week, "and certainly not asking my team to break anyone's leg." But presumably an arm will do.

Outline

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Juventus look for top gear

JUVENTUS'S coach Marcello Lippi has demanded maximum effort of his side later today when they face visiting Fiorentina in the first match of a six-game run-in.

The champions should take all three points easily but with a mere one-point lead over Internazionale at the top, they cannot afford to soft-pedal as the top two still have to meet at the Delle Alpi on April 26.

Inter have a much harder task when they face fourth-placed Roma at the Olympic Stadium today.

Juve, buoyed by Sunday's 1-0 win against Lazio, should be at full strength. "You win the titles by defeating the strongest opponents in head-to-head matches and by piling up points against second-rate opponents," said Lippi. "We must never forget this. We can only gauge the importance of beating Lazio after this game."

"We nearly jeopardised our whole season by drawing with Napoli, Lazio did the same by drawing with Fiorentina, and Inter by losing at home to Bari and Bologna."

Alessandro Del Piero and Filippo Inzaghi, who lead the Juventus attack as usual, will be expected to add to their 53-goal tally for the season. There may also be a place for the Uruguayan Marcelo Zalayeta.

In opposition will be the oldest man in Serie A, Fiorentina's defender Pietro Vierchowod who turned 39 this week and was already well into his second season as a professional when Zalayeta was born.

Ronaldinho, the joint top scorer in Serie A with 19 goals, will come face to face with some familiar faces in the Roma defence, his Brazilian team-mates Aldair and Cafu.

The Inter coach Gigi Simoni is expected to pick

Youri Djorkaeff to partner him up front, despite the Frenchman's poor form since January. The Chilean Ivan Zamorano and Nwankwo Kanu of Nigeria will be on the bench.

Inter have won their previous four league matches but must also secure a victory in this one. Lazio, four points further back, must try and bounce back from the Juve defeat when they travel to struggling Brescia.

Their loss to Juventus in front of 80,000 at the Olympic Stadium was followed by a 1-0 defeat at Milan in Wednesday's Italian Cup final first-leg.

Although Sven Goran Eriksson's side seem to have lost any chance of taking the title, they could still deny Inter a place in the next season's Champions League.

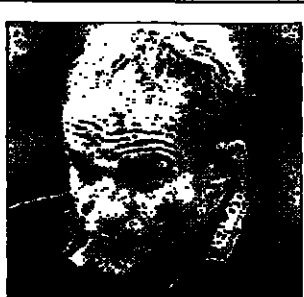
Eriksson is expected to return to a three-man attack, fielding Alen Boksic of Croatia, Roberto Mancini and Pierluigi Castagnoli.



Performance of the week: Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (Leeds United), whose excellent season continued with Wednesday's two goals against Chelsea.



Major league
Temperatures
rise in
Augusta
19



Power play
Saracens
keep title
hopes alive
22

The Guardian
sport
www.football.guardian.co.uk

Owen checks leaders before his dismissal

Premiership: Manchester United 1 Liverpool 1

United leave door open for Arsenal

David Lacey

LIVERPOOL yesterday defended Arsenal's right to remain serious championship contenders. By holding Manchester United at Old Trafford they made it possible for Arsène Wenger's team to narrow the gap at the top of the Premiership to one point over Everton.

While the draw extended United's lead to seven points, Arsenal now have four matches in hand and will play two of them — at home to Newcastle today and away to Blackburn on Monday eve-

ning — before Alex Ferguson's side are again in action. The contest, in short, is still very much alive, and as the United manager admitted afterwards: "The balance of power is now in Arsenal's hands."

Against all the odds, and contradicting their own suicidal tendencies, Liverpool held United despite being reduced to 10 men for almost an hour following the dismissal of Michael Owen nine minutes before half-time. Graham Poll, who a little earlier had booked the 18-year-old England striker for a reckless follow-through on Peter Schmeichel, sent him off for catching Ronny Johnsen's left ankle with a challenge both late and high.

Johnsen went to hospital for X-rays which revealed damaged ligaments — he might be out for three weeks — and it seemed only a matter of time before a Liverpool



Head header... Ronny Johnsen takes advantage of slack Liverpool marking at an 11th-minute corner to put Manchester United in front at Old Trafford

PHOTOGRAPH BY OWEN HUMPHREYS

defence which had already conceded yet another soft goal would crack further.

In the event the opposite happened. Dominic Matteo and Phil Babb defended with growing authority and only at the last did United come close to winning it.

Ryan Giggs, starting his first home game since February 21, gave pace and balance to the attack but was forced off half-time by a recurrence of his hamstring injury. Teddy Sheringham came on to coordinate United's movements for the final 25 minutes but for once Paul Scholes, to whom most of the best chances fell, was off target.

The way the game was going Liverpool might have won had Owen stayed on. So well did Danny Murphy, the 21-year-old brought into the side because of Karlheinz Riedle's back injury, resume his England youth partnership with Owen that this, added to the pace and penetration of Steve McManaman, not only helped Liverpool draw level but was on the point of taking the game over.

Not that it began that way. United all but went ahead before the match was a minute old. Giggs exploited some hesitant control by Murphy to gain possession and sprint he would be a liability. One dash through the Sheffield United defence on Tuesday night and a handful of perceptive passes could not hide the fact that the match eventually began to pass him by.

The dilemma for Hoddle is that, without Gascoigne to pass the ammunition for Alan Shearer, England would be left with nothing but powder monkeys. Sure, Paul Scholes and David Beckham will be there but they will not frighten defenders the way Gascoigne did in Italy in the 1990 tournament.

Gascoigne was useful to England in Rome last October because the main aim was to deny the Italians victory and he did not give the ball away. In France, however, more would be asked of him than he might be able to give. Yet Shearer will need the quality of service that neither a tired Teddy Sheringham nor a raw Michael Owen can be guaranteed to provide.

Not that Gascoigne's age should have anything to do with it. In the opening phase of the World Cup England may be up against a 33-year-old Romanian, Gheorghe Hagi, in Toulouse, followed by a 36-year-old Colombian, Carlos Valderrama, in Lens. Belgium, heavy

blocked the Welshman's shot and as Scholes aimed to place the rebound inside the near post, Babb just managed to get back to stop what had appeared a certain goal.

Yet if Liverpool took some encouragement from this they were quickly disillusioned. One corner from David Beckham was nodded back by Nicky Butt and went behind for another. This time Beckham's kick found Johnsen unmarked and the Norwegian put United in front with the simplest of headers.

United and their followers released a familiar script as being repeated. But soon Liverpool's precise passing

began to gnaw at Old Trafford's nerves.

Shortly before the quarter-hour Owen cleverly worked his way in from the right and although Schmeichel rushed out to meet the danger the ball broke to McManaman, whose close-range shot was kept out by Gary Neville.

Cole, allowed a free header as he met Giggs's short cross, came close to increasing United's lead soon afterwards but Liverpool were imposing themselves and looked the more likely to score.

Briefly it seemed that their best moves would merely exaggerate the bluntness of their misses. After 36 minutes a

shrewd lob forward from Murphy coincided with a clever angled run by McManaman which left him clear and inside with only Schmeichel to beat. McManaman then undid the good work by wafting the ball over the bar.

Within a minute, however, they were level. Again Murphy played an important role, beating Johnsen in the air and nodding the ball towards the United area, but the danger would have been minimal had Gary Pallister and Schmeichel not left the tidying up to each other. Owen darted in to score. Then he was off.

Early in the second half a deft flick of Murphy's instep

sent in Oyvind Leonhardsen but Schmeichel's speed off his line denied Liverpool the lead and thereafter defence became their priority. At the last Rob Jones cleared a header from Cole off the line and Scholes shot narrowly wide, but a winner for United then would have done scant justice to Liverpool's spirit and, for once, their organisation at the back.

Manchester United (4-4-2): Schmeichel; G Neville, Johnsen (May, 45min), Pallister, Irwin; Beckham, Butt, P Neville (Sheeringham, 65), Stop (Thornley, 35), Cole, Scholes.

Liverpool (4-4-2): Friedel, Jones, Matteo, Babb, Harrison; McManaman, Ince, Radzunas, Leonhardsen, Owen, Murphy (Berger, 74).

Referee: G Poll (Tring).

'I let my team down'

Derek Potter

MANCHESTER United manager Alex Ferguson said last night that Arsenal, their rivals for the title, are "firmly in the driving seat now and we have to hope they drop points".

He added: "But it's the nature of football that teams don't win games they are expected to. They are in such a commanding position, the pressure will be on them now."

"The turning points were the injury to Giggs — they equalised while we were reorganising — and the sending off. It can be so difficult against 10 men."

Michael Owen was sent off for the second time after being dismissed playing for England Under-18s against Yugoslavia in September. His second booking found ended the game for Ronny Johnsen five minutes from half-time, leaving the Norwegian with ankle ligament damage and in danger of missing the rest of the season.

"It was a terrible tackle; he does not need to do that," Ferguson said. "If he had been red-carded on his own he would have missed the game against Arsenal."

Ryan Giggs suffered a recurrence of a hamstring injury and his chances of playing against Newcastle United next Saturday are less than 50-50.

"Michael wants to be a winner and maybe there was more going out there than meets the eye," said Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager. "A point keeps us in with a slight chance and I apologise for causing injury to Johnsen. I let my team-mates down, but they did well to hang on."

A knock for Gascoigne is still a strain for Hoddle



David Lacey

ASCOIGNE was in pain at Bramall Lane on Tuesday night, no doubt about that. Two tackles, one in each half, eventually forced him off to nurse a left foot which was both bruised and gashed, and he will miss at least part of Middlebrough's Easter programme.

Compared to the player's history of bad injuries, however, it was hardly a major wound.

All the same the timing is bad for Gascoigne. He still has to prove to Glenn Hoddle, who will finalise England's World Cup party on June 2, that he can recover sufficient fitness and form to be considered for France. So far, since joining Boro from Rangers for £3.45 million, he has provided little evidence of meeting either requirement.

Viv Anderson, Bryan Robson's assistant at Riverside, is confident Gascoigne will be ready by time and matches are running out. On Tuesday Hoddle will announce his squad for the warm-up match

against Portugal at Wembley on April 22; that is to say, he will be giving advance warning of a fresh outbreak of calf strains and tweaked hamstrings in certain dressing rooms. Either way Gazza needs to be in it.

Gascoigne's omission from Hoddle's squad for the game against Switzerland in Bern a fortnight ago raised the serious possibility of England going to France without him. If he misses the Portugal match, through injury or because Hoddle still feels he is not ready for recall, that would leave only the friendly with Saudi Arabia at Wembley on May 23 and the matches against Morocco and Belgium in Casablanca the following week.

MIDDLEBROUGH's appearance in the First Division play-off final on May 26, the day England fly to La Manga for pre-World Cup training, would be an added complication. By then, however, it may have become all too obvious that the World Cup is no place for an injury-plagued 31-year-old who needs to pace himself even in the English First Division.

Not that Gascoigne's age should have anything to do with it. In the opening phase of the World Cup England may be up against a 33-year-old Romanian, Gheorghe Hagi, in Toulouse, followed by a 36-year-old Colombian, Carlos Valderrama, in Lens. Belgium, heavy

with over-thirties, are practically a Dad's Army.

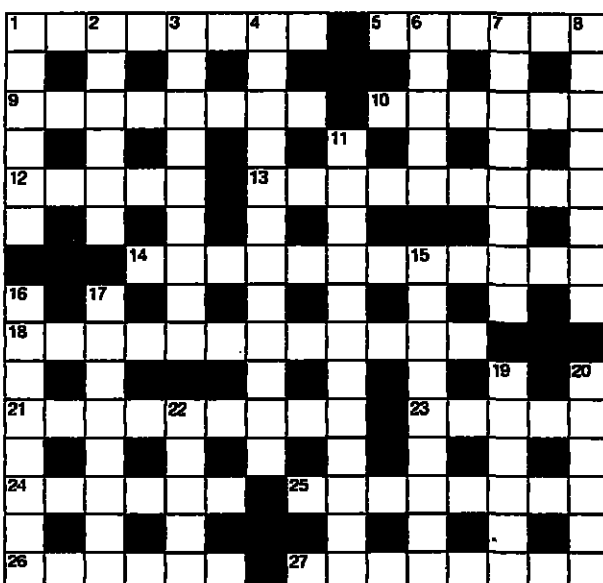
As the only link with England's previous appearance in a World Cup proper Gascoigne has the sort of experience which should be invaluable. Yet on the evidence so far he would be a liability. One dash through the Sheffield United defence on Tuesday night and a handful of perceptive passes could not hide the fact that the match eventually began to pass him by.

The dilemma for Hoddle is that, without Gascoigne to pass the ammunition for Alan Shearer, England would be left with nothing but powder monkeys. Sure, Paul Scholes and David Beckham will be there but they will not frighten defenders the way Gascoigne did in Italy in the 1990 tournament.

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Guardian COLLINS Easter Double Prize Crossword No 21,246



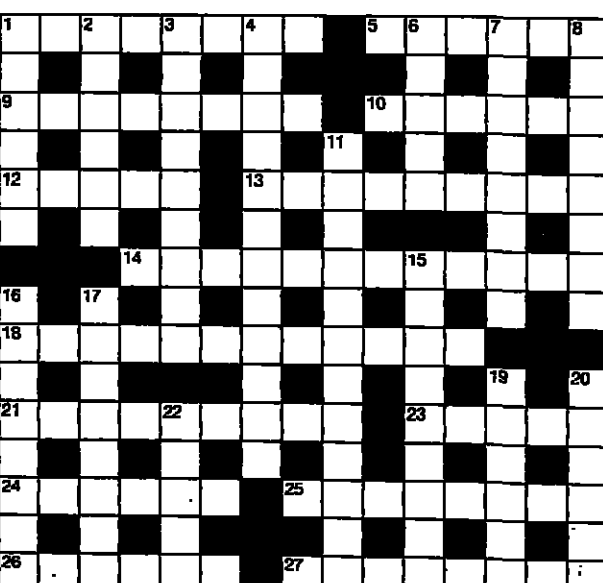
Set by Araucaria

Half the solutions contain animals, which are disregarded in the subsidiary parts of the clues. They are all mammals; such words as DOE or VIXEN have been admitted, but not such as KID or TERRIER or ROO. Where neither solution at any given number contains an animal, the clues have been run together. In all cases clues to the left diagram precede those to the right diagram.

A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first ten correct entries drawn. Entries to The Guardian Crossword, P.O. Box 1464, London, EC1R 3JX, or Fax to 0171 713 4735 by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday April 20.

Name _____

Address _____



and into endless fighting with flower and fish (5,5)

13 British king going to the fifth round with the Navy (9)

14 Banquet, without a cent: capital needed (9)

15 The rich got married Israeli fashion (12)

16 Delivery at weird sport should be crossed and boxed (6,6)

17 Meal (no starter) possibly caught with rod and line, not recorded (12)

18 Naval blowing finds trees on a hill on top of Dartmoor (5,3,4)

19 A lot of hardening for man with listed ark (9)

20 Having a struggle to put end of arm in its support (9)

21 Fruit drink keeps very quiet animals for the setter (5,5)

22 A model's charm (6)

23 Commercial on the ship (6)

24 Left to myself I keep a low profile (5,5)

25 Master of Arts teach production of synopses (8)

26 Coded telephoning is cooked (6)

27 The present of an English flower (6)

28 Sacerdotal Yorkshire writer speaking (8)

29 Like Christmas pudding? Tuck in (8)

30 Bottle to start Monday morning (6)

31 Cast off and row (6)

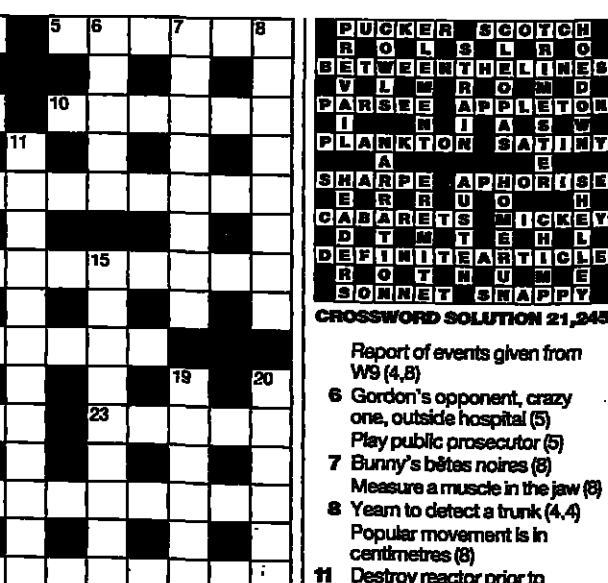
32 Scottish valley brings holy man to Holyhead (6)

33 Call about girl's rent (6)

34 Guard, maybe, or gardener, I revealed (8)

35 The Way of the World — girl makes money (9)

36 In spite of road month, what's just ending's left in it (12)



Report of events given from W9 (4,8)

6 Gordon's opponent, crazy one, outside hospital (5)

7 Play public prosecutor (5)

8 Bunry's betes noires (6)

9 Measure a muscle in the jaw (8)

10 Yearn to detect a trunk (4,4)

11 Popular movement is in centimetres (6)

12 Destroy reactor prior to transport of soldiers (5-7)

13 Dirty — with such clear thinking? (12)

14 Dispense with composer reportedly held by the feller Sartre replaced in goal, which is a blow (3,6,5)

15 People of Khrushchev beheaded in Gillingrad? (8)

16 Proposal not finished in the wings (5-5)

17 "Ours is an _____, ours is" in cold storage right out among prisoners — they're in the soup (8,8)

18 Drunkard has control of tap (6)

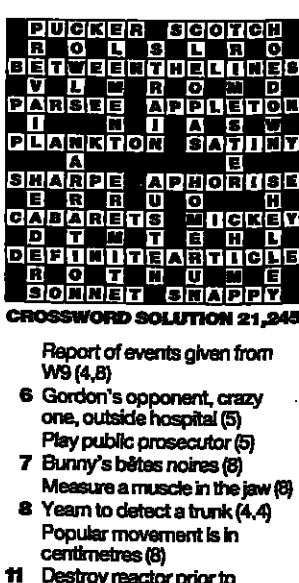
19 A river to discuss (6)

20 Gainvoyant about 50% of capital crime (6)

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